

# THE DATE OF THE CALL OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH : TEXTS AND ISSUES

Robert Scott Hastings

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# THE DATE OF THE CALL OF THE PROPHET JEREMIAH:

TEXTS AND ISSUES

Submitted to the University of St. Andrews  
for the Degree of Ph.D. by

Robert Scott Hastings

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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation entitled, "The Date of the Call of the Prophet Jeremiah: Texts and Issues," attempts to demonstrate that the most plausible date for the beginning of the prophetic career of Jeremiah is that provided in the tradition itself, i.e. the thirteenth year of Josiah (627). In supporting this, two main topics are addressed. First, the alternative dates which have been forwarded in modern scholarship are examined, and shown to be based upon untenable ideas. Secondly, the various objections which have been proffered against the 627 date are analysed, and the case is made that these objections are invalid. Finally, an attempt is made to explain the message and activity of the prophet within the historical milieu of Judah in the years 627-622.

The current study develops this thesis in seven chapters. The first chapter discusses the historical context of the years 640-609, and Josiah's reforms. In chapter two it is argued that the prose sermons should be attributed to Jeremiah, and represent a style of the seventh century. Chapter three demonstrates the implausibility of the alternative dating proposals, while in chapter four it is proposed that the threatened invader of the foe from the north oracles was not originally identified by Jeremiah. The issue of Isaiah and the reforms of Hezekiah as a comparable example is handled in chapter five. Chapter six addresses Jeremiah's attitude toward the cultic reforms of Josiah and the appearance of Deuteronomy in 622, and it is shown that the prophet did speak out in support of the newly published law book. Finally in chapter seven, Jeremiah's relative withdrawal from public activity during the period 622-609 is demonstrated, and the prophet's message is explained in light of the setting of the years 627-622.

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# INTRODUCTION

This thesis will address a topic which has become very prominent in the modern study of the book of Jeremiah, namely the date at which the prophet began to prophesy. The issue is clearly important to any attempt to understand and explicate the significance and meaning of Jeremiah's message within the historical milieu in which it was presented. This is all the more true given the fact that the general period during which the activity of the prophet took place was one of the most important periods of Old Testament history, since it witnessed the final decline and collapse of the old, pre-exilic political and religious order. At the same time, approximately forty-one years before the destruction of the old system, king Josiah carried out political and religious policies which sought to address the problems in Judahite society which some within that community believed were leading the nation to ruin. The dramatic nature of this final phase of Judah's pre-exilic history suggests that it is imperative to explain the message of Jeremiah in light of this setting.

The discussion of the issue of the date of Jeremiah's call focuses on the texts and issues which have dominated scholarly debate on this subject, and is developed in seven chapters. The intention is to handle the various aspects of the discussion in compact units, reaching conclusions on each issue before moving on to the next one. The thesis which will be forwarded is that the date for the beginning of the prophet's public activity provided by the tradition

bearing Jeremiah's name, i.e. the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah (627), is the most plausible date which has thus far been advocated by modern scholarship.

This thesis will develop through a series of discussions relevant to it, beginning in chapter one with an examination of the historical scenario in Judah from the accession of Josiah, up to that of Jehoiakim. It will be proposed that the reforms of the former king should be read in light of an intense party conflict within Judah between advocates of the sole worship of Yahweh, and groups supporting the traditional, syncretistic practices. On the question of the date of the reforms, whose historicity will be defended, it will be demonstrated that the date 628, as presented by the Chronicler, should be followed, and the various motivations for the reforms will be presented. Finally, it will be maintained that the policies of Josiah lapsed under Jehoiakim.

In chapter two, the question of the supposed Deuteronomistic redaction of the book of Jeremiah will be discussed, and the main issues underlying this theory will be examined. The conclusion will be that the prose sermons of Jeremiah are not the work of Deuteronomistic redactors, but rather derive from the prophet himself, who used a style prominent in Judah during the seventh-sixth centuries. This will be linked to the appearance of the pre-exilic Deuteronomistic historians, and the traditions which came to be published in the form of Deuteronomy.

Chapter three will focus predominantly on two aspects. First, the objections forwarded by scholars to the date 627 as that of Jeremiah's first appearance as a prophet will be presented, and the various alternative scenarios which have appeared in modern scholarship will be discussed. Secondly, these proposals will be shown to be too problematic to offer viable alternatives to the 627 date. Finally, three of the objections themselves will be addressed in this chapter, including the claim that all the passages in the book which link the prophet with Josiah's reign are redactional and therefore unreliable, the idea that the 627 date would make Jeremiah too old for his declaration of celibacy in 16:1ff, and the presence of Deuteronomic influence in the prophet's call narrative, which, if dated to 627, would have occurred roughly six years before Deuteronomy's publication in 622. A discussion of 1: 1-4 and

the account of the production of the *Urrolle* in Jer. 36 will be presented which will demonstrate that the prophet himself was responsible for the date in 1:2, and that it is therefore reliable. Moreover, it will be suggested that 16:1ff represents an interpretation of a celibate lifestyle which the prophet had already lived for quite some time, and was necessitated by his uncertainty as to whether Judah would escape divine judgement. By the time of 16:1ff, this lifestyle became permanent. Finally, the Deuteronomic influence present in the call narrative will be linked to Jeremiah's familiarity with the traditions fostered by Yahwistic and reform-oriented groups in Jerusalem and Anathoth which also appear in Deuteronomy, but are older than 622.

The rest of the dissertation will deal with the remaining objections to the 627 date, as well as an attempt to define the message and activity of Jeremiah in light of the reform-context of Josiah's reign. In chapter four, there is a discussion of the objection that the invader described in the prophet's foe from the north oracles must be regarded as the Neo-Babylonians from the beginning, and since this people did not appear directly as Judah's enemy until well after 627, Jeremiah must have begun prophesying at a time subsequent to 627. The descriptions and possible identifications of the invader in the material are discussed, and it is argued that the specific identity of the foe was originally unknown when the oracles were presented, with the Babylonians being named only at a later time (605). Finally, this is linked with the complaint in Jer. 20:10, which presupposes a long time during which the prophet's premonition of destruction from the north had not yet materialised. Thus the unspecified nature of the foe is consistent with the 627 call-date.

Chapter five will address the parallel issue of the prophet Isaiah's relationship to the reforms of king Hezekiah, as an important preparation for dealing with the objection to the 627 date which maintains that because Jeremiah was uninvolved with Josiah's reforms, and takes no position on them, he must not have appeared publicly until a later time. A full treatment of the policies of Hezekiah is presented, which deals with the influences on the reforms, Isaiah's view of the cult, the historicity of the various elements of the reforms, and the chronology of the relevant events.



The conclusion is reached that the reforms were very similar to those of Josiah, and thus the apparent lack of involvement in Hezekiah's reforms on Isaiah's part, as well as his failure to mention them, particularly that element which was both unique to Hezekiah's actions in relation to those of Josiah, and involved the destruction of a religious relic which figured positively in Isaiah's own call experience, i.e. the removal of the bronze saraph called Nehushtan, would provide a good precedent for the lack of any reflection of Josiah's reforms in the Jeremiah tradition, if the latter were true.

Chapter six will show that while Jeremiah was not officially involved in Josiah's reforms, this fact, and the related circumstance that a different prophetic authority was consulted when Deuteronomy appeared in 622, will be explained as due to Jeremiah not yet having obtained the validation and reputation necessary to merit consultation by a royal delegation. An examination of texts relevant to Jeremiah's view of the cult (6:16ff; 7:21ff) will indicate that he was not opposed to the sacrificial cult *per se*, and thus this does not support the idea that Jeremiah would have opposed Josiah's pre-622 cultic reforms. The text 11: 1-14 is discussed, and shown to indicate that the prophet came forward publicly in support of Deuteronomy when it appeared in 622, and he urged its acceptance upon the population of Judah. Two further texts are analysed which have been forwarded as indicating Jeremiah's opposition to Deuteronomy (8:8f; 31:31ff), and shown to be consistent with the interpretation of 11:1ff adopted in this study. The assessment of Josiah's reign found in 22:13ff is also addressed, and explained as indicating that Jeremiah regarded Josiah's reign as a particularly good period in Judah's history, further supporting the idea that Josiah's policies met with Jeremiah's approval.

Finally, chapter seven focuses on the objection to the 627 date which, noting that many scholars who uphold this date also posit a period of silence on Jeremiah's part during the years 622-609, maintains that such a pause in the prophet's activity is problematic, and therefore supports the idea of a lower date. It is demonstrated that such a period of withdrawal is commonly attributed to Isaiah, and that in Jeremiah's case it is quite plausible, since he would have to have waited some time before he could determine whether the

people had responded positively to the moral and social demands of Deuteronomy. Then an explanation is provided according to which the material in Jer. 2-6 is regarded as reflecting two stages of the prophet's activity during the years 627-622, and ending just prior to Deuteronomy's appearance. It is maintained that the prophet first lent support to the ideas of the reforms, but later discovered that the changes in the cultic sphere did not extend to the moral and social spheres. Such texts as 3:6ff; 5:1ff; and 6: 27-30 are explained as reflecting the prophet's criticism of the people's refusal to go beyond Josiah's cultic reforms and return to the basic moral and social demands of Yahweh. But this period was followed by the appearance of Deuteronomy in 622, which offered the hope that this failure would be addressed. After initial support, the prophet withdrew and waited to see whether the new opportunity for real repentance would be exploited. However, he would have spoken on behalf of the covenantal demands during the pilgrimage festivals which Deuteronomy required, and during the public reading of the law book in 615. Finally, 17: 1-14 is shown to reflect a public criticism of the tendency to look back fondly on the pre-reform practises. This trend became recognisable toward the end of Josiah's reign, and led to the lapse of the reforms under Jehoiakim. Thus a period of general withdrawal, although not absolute silence, is well founded for Jeremiah in relation to the years 622-609.

In short, the alternatives proposed for the 627 call-date, as well as the objections to that date themselves, are shown to be tenuous. Thus the validity of the thirteenth year of Josiah as the point at which Jeremiah became active as a prophet is upheld, and the years 627-622 are established as the historical background against which the first phase of Jeremiah's activity in Judah is to be understood.

# CHAPTER 1

## THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT: 640-609

### I. Introduction.

This chapter will discuss the historical context in which the early phase of Jeremiah's career occurred. The period to be examined here is that represented by the years 640-609, i.e. the reign of Josiah up to the accession of Jehoiakim. The issues which will be discussed include the background to Josiah's reforms, the historicity and chronology of these reforms, the motivations behind the changes implemented by Josiah, the implications of the reforms beginning in 628 for issues such as the knowledge of the correct chronology of the reign of Josiah on the part of the author and redactors of 2 Ki. 22f, and the identification of the law book of 622. Finally, attention will be directed to the fate of the Josianic reforms under Jehoiakim. It is appropriate to begin with a discussion of the background to the reforms of Josiah.

### II. The Background to Josiah's Reforms.

#### 1. The Policies of Manasseh.

An important aspect of the background to Josiah's reforms is the policies pursued during the long reign of Manasseh. The Old

Testament descriptions of this reign suggest, at least for most of this period, that Manasseh eagerly pursued a course which strongly promoted syncretistic worship. In light of the depiction of Hezekiah's political policies and religious reforms (see chapter five), Manasseh appears to have been a reactionary who specifically sought to reverse the policies of his father in favour of those of Ahaz. It is true that the description of Manasseh aims at portraying him as the worst monarch whose transgressions sealed the fate of Judah. Such one-sided accounts often occasion doubt about their reliability, since they are polemical portrayals representing the views of an opposing source. Thus it has been suggested that the account of Manasseh's policies is not entirely reliable.<sup>1</sup> However, the fact that Manasseh is portrayed as the worst king of Judah, and the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile are regarded as his fault, does not require the judgement that the account is unreliable to any significant degree. It is in fact precisely the apparently extreme pro-syncretistic policy of Manasseh which suggests its reliability. It has been noted that the era of Judahite history which witnessed the most extreme oscillations between particularly 'pious' (Hezekiah/Josiah) and notoriously 'wicked' (Ahaz/Manasseh) kings coincides with the advent of Assyrian domination. The latter had the effect of escalating the old conflict between various groups within the "Yahweh-alone" movement and those who supported a syncretistic religious environment.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Assyrian factor produced considerable internal instability among competing groups within Judah.<sup>3</sup> Thus it can be maintained that the religious and political policies of the syncretistic, pro-Assyrian party under Ahaz elicited the outrage of the strict-Yahwistic groups, who were temporarily in the ascendance during the reign of Hezekiah. The devastation Judah suffered in 701 as a result of Hezekiah's policies produced a reaction against the strict-Yahwists, and a desire for the relative peace experienced under Ahaz. Manasseh came to the throne at the head of the reactionaries, and sought to undo the damage caused by his father. Finally, the long period of rampant syncretism experienced under Manasseh, and continued by Amon, prompted the reactionary measures of Josiah. The impression

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<sup>1</sup>Albertz, 1994, 335 (note 157); Keulen, 205ff.

<sup>2</sup>M. Smith, 28f.

<sup>3</sup>Seitz, 1989, 36f.

given is that of a nation caught up in an intense internal party strife, which frequently has the effect of strengthening the position of the extreme elements within any party. The issue of Judah's position as either an independent nation, or a subservient vassal of Assyria, exacerbated the situation. The intensity of the internal conflict is clear from two developments. According to 2 Ki. 21:16, Manasseh engaged in the bloody suppression of dissent, and it has been noted that the conflict indicated here may be political in nature.<sup>4</sup> It is plausible to see in Manasseh's actions an attempt to eliminate the influence of those elements who supported the strict Yahwistic and pro-independence policies of Hezekiah. The second development is the assassination of Amon. Given his commitment to Manasseh's policies, and the violent suppression of the pro-reform party by his father, the assassination is most likely linked to Judah's internal struggle (see section II. 2). Thus Manasseh's reign was an antithesis to the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah, but similar to that of Ahaz, because it was an era of such intense internal conflict that competing extremes predominated. The polemical nature of the account of Manasseh in DtrG (Deuteronomistic Historical Work) is to be seen primarily in its tone, and the fact that nothing positive whatsoever is said about him, which contrasts strongly with the Chronicler's account. But none of the actions attributed to Manasseh need occasion doubts in relation to their historicity.

It is worth briefly discussing the Chronicler's claims in 33:11ff, i.e. the claim that Manasseh was forcibly brought before the Assyrian king in Babylon, and later carried out religious reforms. Both of these claims have been rejected as spurious by various commentators.<sup>5</sup> Greßmann has rejected both as fantasy, and asserts that the Chronicler's account of Josiah must also be rejected, since the two are interdependent. According to him, the intended idea is that Manasseh eliminated the Assyrian cults, and Josiah eliminated those of Canaanite origin.<sup>6</sup> However, there is nothing in the relevant texts which suggests such a distinction between Assyrian and Palestinian cults, and 2 Chr. 33:17 mentions changes in the *bamoth* cults, which should be understood as indicating a syncretistic Yahweh worship combined with Baalistic religion.

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., 38.

<sup>5</sup>Lowery, 185ff; Keulen, 212ff.

<sup>6</sup>Greßmann, 1924b, 315f.



Moreover, when Manasseh is said to have purified the temple (33:15f), it is likely that Canaanite cults would have been included. Nor is it likely that the Chronicler intended to exclude Assyrian religious practices from Josiah's reforms. Finally, one should not ignore Amon who reigned between Manasseh and Josiah, and appears to have followed his father's earlier policies. But it has been noted by various scholars that the mention of Babylon suggests the revolt of Shamash-shum-ukin in 652-648, and that Manasseh may have been involved, or simply suspected of involvement. Moreover, his restoration to the throne is thoroughly consistent with Assurbanipal's treatment of other rebellious vassals.<sup>7</sup> It is true that Manasseh is portrayed in Assyrian inscriptions as a loyal vassal.<sup>8</sup> But it should be noted that his pro-Assyrian stance was not one of basic principle, but rather occasioned by political necessity, as it had been with Ahaz. But if he had the chance do without the Assyrians, he undoubtedly would have.<sup>9</sup> A strident pro-Assyrian position in the wake of Hezekiah's reforms was politically understandable. But like any monarch, independent reign was the most desirable situation. The Assyrian factor was an important one in the internal party struggle in Judah, but the issue of strict Yahwism vs. syncretistic religion was the central concern.

However, the question of the reforms remains. Some scholars who uphold Manasseh's arrest by Assurbanipal would reject the idea that any reform took place under Manasseh, citing the prevalence of syncretism in Josiah's time.<sup>10</sup> However, the changes in the temple described in 33:15f would have been easy to reverse, and 33:15 says only that the paraphernalia was removed from Jerusalem, not destroyed. 33:17 claims that changes also occurred at the *bamoth*, and while this was possible at some of the more strongly Yahwistic shrines, one can wonder whether only those in close vicinity to Jerusalem should be considered. It is quite possible that the Chronicler exaggerates the extent of such reforms, but there is a reason why some religious changes are plausible. When Manasseh returned from his meeting with Assurbanipal, he

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<sup>7</sup>Rudolph, 1955, 315ff; Bustenay, 454ff.

<sup>8</sup>See Oppenheim, 1969, 291, 294.

<sup>9</sup>So Bright, 1981, 311f.

<sup>10</sup>Rudolph, 1955, 317f; Bright, 1981, 313 (ftn. 7); Williamson, 391ff.

returned as an Assyrian vassal, which would have further infuriated the opposition. The year 648 would have been the forty-eighth or forty-ninth regnal year of Manasseh. 2 Chr. 33:14 implies that the religious changes took place after his return from Babylon, although not necessarily immediately after, but nonetheless quite close to the end of his reign. Any religious reforms carried out may have been intended to pacify the reform-oriented opposition, with the goal of assuring his son's succession. The significant hatred toward Manasseh which had built up as a result of his policies, his reconfirmation as an Assyrian vassal, and his persecution of the strict Yahwists would have presaged difficulty for the succession unless the opposition was mollified to some extent. This appears to have happened, since Amon was safely installed as king. But he was nonetheless assassinated two years later, suggesting that when it became clear that he would follow his father's earlier policies, frustration and anger grew until he was murdered. Thus the limited reforms carried out by Manasseh came very late in his reign as an act of compromise with the opposition, and, never having been firmly established, were easily abandoned a few years later by Amon.

## 2. The Assassination of Amon.

It is of course the case that Josiah came to the throne after the assassination of his father, which must be linked to the internal situation in Judah. However, no motive is given to the conspirators. A popular explanation for this event focuses on political motivations, whereby Amon is reckoned to have been an adherent of his father's pro-Assyrian policies. Thus it has been proposed that the conspirators wished to orient Judah's foreign policy toward an anti-Assyrian position.<sup>11</sup> Others have emphasised a religious motivation, suggesting that a reform-oriented court faction murdered Amon because of his resistance to reforms.<sup>12</sup> Certainly this idea finds support in the fact that the reform party which developed under Hezekiah had been suppressed with such brutality that one could understand their desire to strike back.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Malamat, 1953, 26ff; Cazalles, 1967, 42f; Bright, 1981, 316.

<sup>12</sup>Kittel, 1925, 401f.

<sup>13</sup>So H. Schmidt, 159.

Moreover, if Manasseh had implemented reforms at the end of his reign, then Amon would actually have reversed these changes, and the prospect of returning to the situation under Manasseh may have prompted the reform-party to eliminate Amon. Thus his murder should be linked to the intense party strife prevalent in Judah. However, it cannot be determined whether the group based on officials such as Shaphan, Hilkiah, and Achbor, which should be reckoned as a significant element in the Yahweh-alone movement,<sup>14</sup> were involved in any way. But the milieu in which the assassination took place suggests that some element of the reform party was involved.

### 3. The Early Years of Josiah.

The most likely scenario for developments at the court after the accession of Josiah, but prior to the implementation of reforms, depends upon whether one follows the apparent chronology of 2 Kings, where reforms do not appear to begin until Josiah's eighteenth year, or that of 2 Chronicles, where reforms begin in his twelfth year. However, the young age of the king ensures that at the time of his accession, factions at the court were competing for influence over him. If she was alive at the time, the queen-mother Jedidah bat Adaiah probably held considerable power. Torrey assumes that she was alive, and that Jer. 13:18f is addressed to her and her son.<sup>15</sup> However, it is more likely that this passage relates to one of Josiah's successors. But despite the fact that she is not mentioned elsewhere, she could have figured prominently. It is not clear whether the reform party centred on Shaphan, Achbor, Hilkiah, and others had been the dominant faction at the court during Amon's assassination, or came to prominence afterwards. Certainly the "people of the land" who forcibly installed Josiah on the throne were a powerful force at the court in Josiah's early years.<sup>16</sup> But the fact that the former group figures in the king's later reforms suggests that at some point they obtained influence over the young king, and thus guided his development in the direction of the goals of the reform party. It will be noted in chapter two that

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<sup>14</sup>M. Smith, 22, 34.

<sup>15</sup>Torrey, 205.

<sup>16</sup>Seitz, 1989, 72f.



a pre-exilic edition of DtrG which culminated in Hezekiah, under whom the reform-oriented groups originally came to power, existed in the early years of Josiah, and that Josiah's great-grandfather was forwarded as a model for the young king. This period during which the reformers guided Josiah's upbringing provides initial support for the Chronicler's account of Josiah's reforms. It is noted in 34:3 that at the age of sixteen Josiah "began to seek the God of his father David." This suggests that by his eighth year, Josiah was beginning to reflect the influence of the reformers publicly. It has been held that this is fictitious, since the Chronicler simply wishes Josiah to display his piety as soon as possible.<sup>17</sup> But it is precisely at about the age of sixteen that one could expect the king to begin to become more visible in state affairs. The fact that the reforms do not begin for another five years suggests that the reform party did not yet see the time as right for change. But it should also be noted that another important source of influence on the young king may well have been the prophet Zephaniah. It has been proposed that his unusually long genealogy (1:1) going back to Hezekiah suggests that he was a descendant of the king by this name, and hence a member of the royal family.<sup>18</sup> It is not known at what point during the reign of Josiah he was active, but it has been plausibly suggested that his activity occurred early in Josiah's reign.<sup>19</sup> If this is true, then he may well have been part of the reform party which influenced the young Josiah toward reform.

### III. The Historicity of the Josianic Reforms.

#### 1. General Comments.

Lowery has noted that so much scholarly literature has been written on the reforms of Josiah that it could reach to the moon.<sup>20</sup> The confines of this require that the discussion be limited to taking a position on the complicated issue of the nature and chronology of Josiah's reforms. The older view that 2 Ki. 22f presents an historical account of a remarkable reformation of Judahite religion has

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<sup>17</sup>Wellhausen, 1883, 210f.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 1963, 150; J. M. P. Smith, 182f.

<sup>19</sup>Roberts, 163, 171; Sellin, 1930, 414f.

<sup>20</sup>Lowery, 190.

encountered significant challenges to its validity. According to Day, the entire account is a fiction written by Deuteronomists in the post-exilic period as a deception meant to give authority to Deuteronomy, itself a post-exilic creation. But another significant aspect of this position is that the entire presentation of a history whereby wicked and reforming kings follow one another is regarded as false. In other words, the old syncretistic worship of Yahweh continued unabated up to the exile.<sup>21</sup> Leaving aside the question of the date of Deuteronomy, since even upholding a late date for Deuteronomy does not necessitate that no reforms were carried out, it is worth noting that the basic position that there were no substantial attempts to purify the Yahweh cult of syncretistic and paganising aspects, beyond perhaps Assyrian elements, in pre-exilic Judah has been taken up by several scholars.<sup>22</sup> This suggests that a Canaanite-type Yahweh worship was the norm, rather than a pure Yahwism. Now while it is true that for a large section of the pre-exilic population of Judah throughout its history, proper religion was regarded as involving a syncretistic, non-monolatrous system in which Yahweh was only one deity, it is nonetheless going too far to maintain that this was the only view, and consequently, to regard the basic historical presentation of the period extending from the reign of Ahaz up to the exile as a fabrication. Niehr suggests that since Old Testament texts represent merely secondary evidence, one is justified in adopting a minimalist approach whereby everything not corroborated by contemporary evidence is to be dismissed,<sup>23</sup> and much of the more recent work on Josiah's reforms seems to follow such an approach. However, the latter can be questioned. In the case of DtrG, while the bias of Deuteronomistic circles is clearly present, there is no evidence upon which to base the claim that it is substantially unreliable. The Deuteronomistic sources sought to interpret Israel's history in relation to a specific theological perspective, but it is going too far to accuse them of falsifying or creating history. The position taken on the origination of DtrG is very important here. This issue will be discussed in chapter two, where the conclusion reached lies between the views of Provan and Weippert, maintaining that two

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<sup>21</sup>E. Day, 1902, 197ff; 1910, 75.

<sup>22</sup>Carroll, 1981, 103f; Levin, 1984, 354; Handy, 1994, 40ff; Niehr, 33ff.

<sup>23</sup>Niehr, 36.

pre-exilic editions of DtrG were produced, one early in Josiah's reign, and one toward the end of Jehoiakim's reign. Given this position, a falsification of history is unlikely, not only because the editors' contemporaries would easily recognise this, but also because the official state and temple annals were an important source for these writers, and, especially in the case of the second pre-exilic edition, the writers themselves experienced the reign of Josiah. Thus while the evidence may be 'secondary,' it is close enough to the events narrated to suggest its reliability.

It was noted in section II that the history of Judah from Ahaz onwards suggests an intense party struggle between two basic groupings, i.e. the Yahweh-alone movement, and the syncretistic party. M. Smith has suggested that the former were the minority group,<sup>24</sup> and this agrees with the acknowledgement made earlier, namely that the religion of much of the pre-exilic Judahite population was syncretistic. Nonetheless, at least since the time of Elijah, the strict Yahwists had been able to assert themselves on the royal government. It was also said that this factional strife greatly increased when Assyrian domination entered the equation. Now it has been asserted rightly that many scholars have over-estimated the extent of the incursion of Assyrian religion within the Judahite cult.<sup>25</sup> However, the intensification of the party strife in Judah as a result of the Assyrians was not specifically due to the issue of Assyrian religion. While it is reasonable to assume some Assyrian cultic practices in Jerusalem as a result of Judah's vassalage, and that the Yahwists would naturally oppose this, the limited presence of such influences was not the main issue. Recognising foreign domination contradicted the view that Yahweh alone was sufficient to protect the nation, which was Isaiah's reason for advising Ahaz not to recognise Tiglath-Pileser III as overlord, thereby suggesting that Yahweh was not the most powerful deity. This had the effect of further undermining the demand that He alone was to be worshipped, giving credence to the views of the syncretistic party in general, and legitimating the enduring Canaanite-type of syncretism. If Yahweh was a weak deity, then the claims of the strict Yahwists that He alone should be venerated were empty, and

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<sup>24</sup>M. Smith, 36.

<sup>25</sup>Niehr, 33ff.

this resulted in a general receptivity to syncretism. In Judah's case, this would enhance Canaanite, rather than Assyrian, cult practises. Thus M. Smith is right to emphasise the fact that the most notable reforming kings (Hezekiah and Josiah) also pursued a policy of independence, whereas the two kings who favoured the syncretists (Ahaz and Manasseh) were receptive to alliance with Assyria.<sup>26</sup>

## 2. The Styles in 2 Ki. 22:3-23:3 and 23:4ff.

These considerations have implications for the position to be taken on the historicity of Josiah's reforms. The current account in 2 Ki. 22f readily divides into two parts: the events centred on the book of the law (22:3-23:3, 21-23), and a detailed list of the various actions involved in the purification of the cult (23: 4-20). It has been suggested that these two parts display different styles, i.e. the presentation of the book of the law in 22:3ff represents a vivid, stylised narrative, whereas 23:4ff is a compact, abrupt listing of different actions, lacking the type of narrative framework found in 22:3ff. A particularly significant factor in the question of style is the repeated occurrence of the vav-perfect (we-qatal) construction, in the place of the more usual vav-imperfect consecutive, as a means of continuing the narrative in 23:4ff. The use of this form has generated considerable debate as to its origin. It has been frequently seen as indicative of copyist errors whereby a late Hebrew form is used in the place of the older one,<sup>27</sup> secondary insertions,<sup>28</sup> or simply textual corruption.<sup>29</sup> However, it has been rightly noted that the frequency of its use argues against mere corruption, and the probability that redactors interpolating such a text would be more likely to adapt their additions to fit the syntax of the context, and thus would have simply used the vav-imperfect consecutive, argues against all the clauses introduced by the we-qatal form indicating additions.<sup>30</sup> Thus other scholars have proposed different explanations. A prominent suggestion has been

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<sup>26</sup>M. Smith, 28f.

<sup>27</sup>Rubinstein, 68f.

<sup>28</sup>GKC §112pp; Stade, 1885, 292; 1886, 171; Hollenstein, 321f, 326, 336; Provan, 85, 88.

<sup>29</sup>GKC §112qq, tt.

<sup>30</sup>Oestreicher, 15; Koch, 83ff.

that the form is actually quite ancient,<sup>31</sup> and was used in annals and monuments.<sup>32</sup> On the other hand, Oestreicher suggests that it is used to describe events factually related to other events, but not standing in a direct chronological relation to them.<sup>33</sup> However, Koch has shown that in 2 Ki. 23 the vav-perfect functions to relate actions which are marked by their finality and permanence in comparison with other actions, and structurally mark the end of a sequence of events.<sup>34</sup> The lack of this stylistic feature in 22:3ff has led many to conclude that the two parts of the Josianic-reform narrative derive from two different sources.<sup>35</sup> However, this is not the only possible explanation for the two different components of the overall account. The vivid narrative depicting Josiah's reaction to the book, and his public presentation of it, suggests that its author regarded the law book as the most important feature of Josiah's reign. As will be discussed later, it is the priority given to the law book which may explain why the description of its presentation was placed first, thus creating a chronology which appears to indicate that the cultic reforms followed the appearance of the book. What is significant here is that the same writer, wishing to stress the importance of the law book, could readily have produced the vivid stylised account found in 22:3ff, and then was content to provide a concise list of various actions taken during the cultic reforms in such a way as to suggest that he simply made excerpts from an annalistic source. Scholars such as Dietrich have pointed out that the styles of the two components are not as different as some have suggested.<sup>36</sup>

### 3. The Historicity of the Cultic Reforms of 23:4ff.

In looking at the list of the reforms affecting Judah (i.e. 23: 4-14), several attempts have been made to limit greatly the historically reliable material in it. Leaving aside the issue of cultic centralisation for the moment, it can be noted that one approach would regard only vv. 4 (5), and 11f to reflect the genuine actions of

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<sup>31</sup>Meyer, 118ff.

<sup>32</sup>Montgomery, 1934, 50f; Nelson, 80.

<sup>33</sup>Oestreicher, 31f.

<sup>34</sup>Koch, 83ff.

<sup>35</sup>Oestreicher, 14f, 40, 43; Koch, 82f, 90f.

<sup>36</sup>Dietrich, 32 (ftn. 87).



Josiah, which concern only the elimination of Assyrian cultic paraphernalia.<sup>37</sup> Another, more radical approach disregards all of the cultic actions except vs. 8a, i.e. cultic centralisation, which is viewed as a primarily political action.<sup>38</sup> The elimination of the Assyrian cultic items can indeed be seen as a political action, indicating the rejection of Assyrian dominance (see section V. 1). However the context suggested above, i.e. the conflict between the strict Yahwists and the syncretistic party, would suggest that it was not only Assyrian cultic practises which Josiah would attack. It was the Palestinian syncretistic practices in particular which distinguished the two groups, and against which the reformers would take strong action. While political motivations are rightly posited here, they should not be regarded as the only motivations, since the concerns of the Yahweh-alone groups were fundamentally religious, with political concerns stemming from them. Moreover, Giesemann has rightly described the second approach noted above as extreme, and based upon a series of literary-critical operations which are open to question.<sup>39</sup> Apart from any glosses, 23:4ff presents a list of credible cultic reform measures carried out within the context suggested above.

#### 4. The Historicity of the Account of Josiah and the Law Book in 2 Ki. 22:3ff.

The historicity of the narrative describing Josiah's reception of the law book has also been questioned, in whole and in part. It has been proposed that the whole of 22:3-23:3 is a fiction written as a parallel to Jer. 36 and 2 Ki. 12, with the intention of portraying Josiah as the exact, positive counterpart to Jehoiakim. But not only are the parallels between the two sets of material significant here, but also various items of the narrative are deemed to indicate an historical fiction: three readings of Deuteronomy in one day are impossible, the law could not have become lost in the first place, Hilkiyah and Shaphan do not respond properly to the law book, the implausibility of Josiah becoming agitated if presented with Deuteronomy, and the superfluousness of consulting Huldah.

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<sup>37</sup>Hollenstein, 321ff.

<sup>38</sup>Levin, 1984, 351ff; Niehr, 33ff.

<sup>39</sup>Giesemann, 230.

Thus the whole of 2 Ki. 22:3-23:3 is a Deuteronomistic invention.<sup>40</sup> It is of course the case that the direction of dependence between 2 Ki. 22:3-23:3 and Jer. 36 is often reckoned to be the reverse (see chapter three), although Lohfink explains the similarities as due to both narratives deriving from the group centred on the family of Shaphan.<sup>41</sup> But the latter is unlikely given that the most likely source for Jer. 36 is Baruch, and it can be said that the idea that either account is a complete fiction is an unnecessary conclusion, since similarities between the two are only natural given the very similar events described, i.e. the presentation of a book of great significance which forces the reigning monarch to adopt a specific position on it. In the discussion of Jer. 36 in chapter three, it will be suggested that Jer. 36 may have experienced limited redactional activity intended to reinforce the natural parallels between the two events. The fact that the account of the temple renovation in 2 Ki. 22: 3-7 is very similar to that in 2 Ki. 12 has also been noted by Dietrich, who concludes that it has been copied and placed in its current location in order to make up for the lack of any indication in the original account (22:3, 8, 10, 12, 31a) as to how the law book appeared. But he accepts the historicity of the basic idea of a law book being presented to Josiah, and his decision to seek prophetic advice.<sup>42</sup> As concerns the former position, it can be said that the list of features in the account which are supposed to indicate its spuriousness rests on a rather subjective approach, i.e. determining what could or could not have happened, and a basic problem with this methodology is that the narrative itself does not provide the kind of details necessary to understand the subtleties behind the various stages in the development. This does not indicate spuriousness, but rather the main interest of the writer, i.e. Josiah's response to the law book. For every supposed implausibility in the account, answers are possible; three readings of the whole book did not take place, but rather the book was read *from* three times in one day; it was not the law which became lost, since Deuteronomy did not become the "law" until 622. Prior to that time, it was a program fostered by reform circles under Hezekiah after the arrival of 'Deuteronomic' traditions in Jerusalem, which later became lost

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<sup>40</sup>Tillesse, 351ff.

<sup>41</sup>Lohfink, 1978, 333ff.

<sup>42</sup>Dietrich, 13ff.

during Manasseh's persecution of the Yahwists. The narrative may not really reflect the actual reactions of Shaphan and Hilkiah, since the most important matter is Josiah's reaction, which is vividly described. But there is nothing implausible about Hilkiah entrusting Shaphan with presenting the book to Josiah, since, as the royal scribe, he was probably the official in most regular contact with the king. It has also been noted that the reaction of Shaphan is that of the shrewd courtier. By presenting the book in a neutral manner, he does not anticipate Josiah's reaction and thereby risk taking a position which conflicts with that of his royal master.<sup>43</sup> Clearly the curses in Deuteronomy would have given cause for considerable alarm, and it is not certain that Deut. 28: 47-68 is post-exilic.<sup>44</sup> Threats of invasion and its dreadful consequences as Yahweh's punishment for Judah's sin are found in Jeremiah, and suggest that such a theme was in vogue at the time. Moreover, Josiah did not seek prophetic advice to determine the legitimacy of the book or to determine its content, but rather to know whether its threats of calamity would come to pass. When it is said that Josiah would not have carried out these reforms after receiving such an oracle, this assertion is probably correct. But what this conclusion does is to provide a strong support for the chronology of the Chronicler, i.e. the cultic reforms were already carried out. In short, attempting to list supposed implausibilities in the narrative to support the contention that it is not historical is too subjective, and effectively based on a lack of knowledge, to be compelling. As concerns the temple renovation work, a different explanation is possible than that the whole idea is spurious. It has been suggested that both pieces were written by the same writer, or that 2 Ki. 22: 3-7 has simply been redacted in light of 2 Ki. 12.<sup>45</sup> But the extent of the similarities suggests that 2 Ki. 22: 3-7 is copied from 2 Ki. 12. However, this does not indicate that no renovation work took place, but only that it reminded the writer of the account in 2 Ki. 12, prompting him to reuse this description in his own narrative. Thus one can uphold the basic historicity of temple repair work, the presentation of the law book to Josiah, the consultation with Huldah, and a covenant ceremony as the significant events of 622.

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<sup>43</sup>Oestreicher, 19.

<sup>44</sup>Pace Tillesse, 368f.

<sup>45</sup>Wellhausen, 1889, 294, and Kegel, 27f, respectively.



## 5. Huldah's Involvement in 2 Ki. 22.

As noted above, the fact that Josiah sought out prophetic advice about the book in 622 is logical. However, 2 Ki. 22:13 does not specifically give Josiah's main reason for doing so, and it is quite likely that the king's command is the wording of the Deuteronomistic redactor. It has been suggested that Josiah wanted advice on the legitimacy of the book itself, or what he should do about it.<sup>46</sup> Thus Greßmann suggests that Huldah's original oracle was positive, and declared that Yahweh would revoke His threats of calamity.<sup>47</sup> However, there are points against such an approach. There is nothing in the current form of Huldah's oracle to suggest that the book's legitimacy was in question. Tillesse rightly notes that the question of the validity of a torah-book was really one for the priests,<sup>48</sup> and Hilkiah's involvement in the affair obviated the need for prophetic advice on this point. Josiah's reaction in 22:11 suggests that he regarded the book as legitimate. As concerns a positive reaction on Huldah's part, it can be noted again that this contradicts what the current oracle says, and thus one must hold to the idea that the oracle has been so heavily redacted as to obliterate the original,<sup>49</sup> or that a spurious second oracle has been interpolated,<sup>50</sup> in order to circumvent this problem. But while it is possible that the current oracle reflects the wording of the redactors, and the presence of some textual difficulties suggests some problems in transmission, it is plausible that the basic ideas upon which this oracle was constructed were found in the writer's source. Although there would appear to be two separate oracles in vv. 15-17 and 18-20, this indicates nothing more than that the delegation arrived with two specific questions, i.e. would the curses of the book come upon Judah, and what this entailed for Yahweh's view of the king.<sup>51</sup> It was these two elements reflected in the source material which caused the redactor to compose 22:13 in the way he did, and he took this basic information about Huldah's statements

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<sup>46</sup>Dietrich, 25ff.

<sup>47</sup>Greßmann, 1924b, 319.

<sup>48</sup>Tillesse, 369f.

<sup>49</sup>Dietrich, 23ff.

<sup>50</sup>Greßmann, 1924b, 318ff; Rose, 51, 54ff.

<sup>51</sup>So Kegel, 27f; Oestreicher, 26, 28.

and produced the double oracle. The most compelling reason for asserting that the original oracle must have been positive is that, after hearing the statements underlying the current oracle, he would not have carried out such extensive reforms.<sup>52</sup> But in reality the most this objection does is to provide support for the idea that the cultic reforms in 23: 4-20 were carried out before 622 as the Chronicler claims. Thus all that remained was to endorse Deuteronomy in a public ceremony, pledge his loyalty to its ideas, and celebrate the Passover. Given the statement about Yahweh's approval of the king, there would have been no hesitation in doing this. In fact, if the cultic reforms took place earlier, one can well understand the king's need for prophetic advice. Josiah had just reformed the nation's cult in accordance with the views of the strict Yahwists, thus he would naturally wish to know whether the book's threats were nonetheless still in effect. Huldah clearly believed that they were. Thus the basic ideas in Huldah's oracle can be upheld, although its current wording is due to the Deuteronomistic redactors.

#### 6. Centralisation of the Cult.

Finally, there is one of the most disputed issues, i.e. cultic centralisation, which many scholars have rejected. One such approach is that followed by commentators who date Deuteronomy to the exilic or post-exilic periods, i.e. if Deuteronomy is not pre-exilic, then at least vs. 8 must be a later insertion in 2 Ki. 23.<sup>53</sup> Others have proposed, whether supporting a late date for Deuteronomy or not, that centralisation of the cult was simply impossible in pre-exilic Judah.<sup>54</sup> A great deal can be, and indeed has been, said about this matter. But it is sufficient here to make a few observations. While the idea that Deuteronomy is not of pre-exilic origin is rejected here, nonetheless even granting this position for the sake of argument, it is clearly true that this would not have implications for 2 Ki. 23:8f. One could simply argue that the provisions for cultic centralisation in an exilic or post-exilic Deuteronomy owe their existence to the previous actions of Josiah

<sup>52</sup> Greßmann, 1924b, 319; Dietrich, 25ff; Tillesse, 370.

<sup>53</sup> E. Day, 1902, 197ff; Hölscher, 1922, 190; 1923, 206, 209ff.

<sup>54</sup> Vernes, 1889, 469ff; 1890, 187; Hollenstein, 332ff, 335f.

toward the *bamoth*.<sup>55</sup> As will become clear in the next section, there are various possible motivations behind cultic centralisation. Indeed, it will be maintained that the Chronicler's chronology is correct, and thus the *bamoth* were eliminated before Deuteronomy's discovery. Moreover, that Deuteronomy was not necessary for this policy is clear from the fact that Hezekiah had implemented it earlier (see chapter five). The view adopted in chapter two, and briefly noted above, is that Hezekiah was used by the Yahweh-alone faction at the court as a model for the young Josiah, providing one significant explanation for Josiah's centralisation of the cult. However, it should also be noted that other scholars who reject a pre-exilic date for Deuteronomy nonetheless uphold the historicity of Josiah's removal of the shrines,<sup>56</sup> and even the more radical views of Levin and Niehr, as noted above, identify the only historical part of 2 Ki. 22f to be that of cultic centralisation.<sup>57</sup> The claim that cultic centralisation was impossible in pre-exilic Judah is particularly problematic because it fails to recognise that throughout history reformations and revolutions, stemming ultimately from factions within movements which can be described as extreme in relation to society in general, have attempted to implement policies which had to fail inevitably. It was noted earlier that since the reign of Ahaz, factional strife in Judah reached a high level of intensity. Such situations always bolster the extremists. Thus while it is true that it would have been impossible to introduce *permanent* centralisation of the cult successfully, as the reign of Hezekiah indicates, this in no way necessitates that certain factions would not attempt it. Given the fact that Josiah had the military behind him, he could do this temporarily, but reaction to it was inevitable. In chapter seven, it will be suggested that Jer. 17: 1-4 is a specific indication of popular dissatisfaction with the removal of the *bamoth*, and that this displeasure began to appear toward the end of Josiah's reign. In short, history clearly attests that reformers and revolutionaries are often utopian in their thinking, and consequently implement policies which provoke reaction and fail.

#### IV. The Chronology of the Reforms.

<sup>55</sup>Cf. the comments of Budde, 1926, 196.

<sup>56</sup>Kennett, 1920, 12, 14f; Berry, 50.

<sup>57</sup>Levin, 1984, 351ff; Niehr, 33ff.

## 1. Introduction.

If one may uphold the general picture of Josiah as carrying out significant reforms in Judah's cult, including both the purification of syncretistic and idolatrous elements from Yahweh-worship, as well as the centralisation of the latter in the Jerusalem temple, and that a law book found in that temple had influenced the events of 622, then the question of the chronology of the reforms must be addressed. The account in 2 Ki. 22f enumerates the cultic reform measures (23:4ff) after the events of 622 (22:3-23:3, 21-23). While the former are not dated, the latter twice connects the developments surrounding the book specifically with Josiah's eighteenth year. Thus the current structure of the two parts of 2 Ki. 22f creates the appearance that it was not until 622 that Josiah intervened in the cult. On the other hand, 2 Chronicles depicts reforms carried out in stages, whereby in his eighth year the king began to show his personal identification with the strict Yahwists, then extensive reforms began in his twelfth year, finally being followed by the events associated with the law book in 622. Thus the question as to whether reforms were carried out prior to 622 becomes pertinent, and an answer to it is crucial for any attempt to place the message and activity of Jeremiah in a historical context. If the apparent chronology of 2 Kings is followed, then Jeremiah's call, according to 1:2, occurred well before any reforms were implemented, and thus within a religious context in which syncretism was dominant. But if the Chronicler is correct, then Jeremiah appeared roughly one year after reforms had begun. Thus the position taken on this issue has important consequences for the topic of this dissertation.

## 2. The Chronology of 2 Kings.

In examining the issue of the chronology of Josiah's reforms, there is of course the question of the historicity of Chronicles generally, particularly when information contradicts or supplements that of Kings. This is clearly the case here, and the approach of Wellhausen denies credibility or historicity to the Chronicler in such cases. Thus following Wellhausen, one would adopt the apparent chronology of 2 Kings, and regard the

Chronicler's dates as fictitious.<sup>58</sup> However, the later trend in regard to Chronicles acknowledges that its authors have used sources which contain authentic, historical material, and thus, although care must be taken in light of the Chronicler's exaggerations, anachronisms, and tendentious interpretations, an historical kernel can be found at the base of various narratives. A relevant example was discussed briefly in section II, i.e. the question of Manasseh's arrest, return, and subsequent religious changes. Thus in the case of the Josiah narrative, the question of chronology is worth discussing.

Nonetheless, it can be stated that the apparent chronology of 2 Ki. 22f provides a straightforward picture. The policies of Amon continued under Josiah until a law book is presented to the king, which prompts him to purify and centralise the Yahweh cult. In other words, as Greßmann notes, 2 Ki. 22f provides a clear motivation for the Josianic reforms, namely the appearance of Deuteronomy, whereas in the Chronicler's account, there is no clear impetus for the reforms.<sup>59</sup> In fact, it has been proposed that the Chronicler's intention was to portray Josiah as so pious that he did not need an impetus for reform.<sup>60</sup> Moreover, it has been suggested that the chronology in 2 Chr. 34 reveals a particular intention, i.e. objection was taken to eighteen years of syncretism and idolatry under the great reformer, so the decision was taken to falsify this by inventing a chronology according to which religious reforms occurred much earlier.<sup>61</sup> Thus many scholars have rejected the chronology of the Chronicler,<sup>62</sup> and in the case of Jeremiah commentators who uphold the 627 call-date, this entails the important result that, since the prophet appeared roughly five years before 622, his message prepared the way for Josiah's decision to implement reforms.<sup>63</sup>

### 3. The Chronology of 2 Chr. 34.

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<sup>58</sup>Wellhausen, 1883, 210f, 231ff; Steuernagel, 190.

<sup>59</sup>Greßmann, 1924b, 313ff.

<sup>60</sup>Thenius, 417f.

<sup>61</sup>Graf, 1866, 175f; Rudolph, 1955, 319ff.

<sup>62</sup>Budde, 1926, 196f; Eissfeldt, 1964, 728.

<sup>63</sup>Marti, 1889, 14; Volz, 1928, 42; Scharbert, 44.



Before addressing the question of the impetus for the reforms, a few comments can be made about the dates in 2 Chr. 34, and some of the problems raised by the apparent chronology in 2 Ki. 22f. First, the idea that the dates "eighth year" and "twelfth year" are fictitious and indicate a tendentious attempt to reduce the amount of time during which syncretism continued under Josiah is tenuous. This could perhaps be upheld if the Chronicler reported only one date prior to Josiah's eighteenth year. But the presence of the two dates argues against a fiction, since if the goal were to make Josiah's piety appear as early as possible, then the extra four years of continued syncretism created by the Chronicler would be counter-productive. He would simply have chosen either date as the beginning of the reforms. The reference to the eighth year, as noted in section II, fits the idea that Josiah's development was being guided by the Yahweh-alone faction at the court, with its influence over Josiah becoming visible publicly at the age of sixteen, but the situation for reform not being propitious until some time later.

At the same time, problems with the apparent chronology in 2 Ki. 22f have been noted. First, the fact that the temple was being renovated suggests that some type of reforms were already underway.<sup>64</sup> It is also very difficult to believe that Josiah conducted the public covenant ceremony in Yahweh's temple surrounded by all the trappings of syncretism and idolatry presupposed by 23:4ff. Certainly the current arrangement of the account places the Passover (vv. 21-23) both in Josiah's eighteenth year, and after the cultic reforms. But it has been noted that 23: 21-23 originally followed 23: 1-3,<sup>65</sup> which is clear from the references to "this book of the covenant," the people, and Josiah's eighteenth year, which appear in both sets of material. Again, it is unlikely that the Passover was celebrated before the reform measures of 23:4ff were carried out, and the atmosphere of syncretism removed. But the current position of 23: 21-23 raises another pertinent issue, namely that while the purification of the temple, and perhaps Jerusalem in general, can have been accomplished in a year, the destruction and defiling of the *bamoth* throughout Judah (23:8), and the extension of such actions into the north (23:15, 19f), must have taken much

<sup>64</sup>Rowley, 1950, 164; J. Bright, 1965, XXXIX.

<sup>65</sup>Koch, 82; Lohfink, 1987, 461, 463.

longer.<sup>66</sup> According to 2 Chr. 34, this took roughly six years, which, assuming that Josiah's measures in centralising the cult were thorough, is more realistic.

## V. Motivations for the Reforms.

### 1. Political Factors.

As noted above, scholars who follow the apparent chronology of 2 Ki. 22f emphasise the fact that this approach provides a palpable motivation for the reforms of Josiah. It is true that 2 Chr. 34 provides no dramatic event which provoked the reforms, but there are other plausible motivations for implementing reforms which do not require the law book of 622, and the combination of these factors can be regarded as giving an impetus to the reforms.

One such factor involves political policies, both external and internal. It was noted earlier that Manasseh's recognition of Assyrian dominance was reaffirmed at the end of his reign. The assassination of Amon, linked to the internal strife between the strict Yahwists and syncretists in which the issue of relations with Assyria was important, suggested an anti-Assyrian element in the murder. It has been noted that there was no Assyrian reprisal for this event, and that this may indicate that the actions of the people of the land must have satisfied the Assyrians.<sup>67</sup> Thus following Josiah's accession, Judah remained a vassal of Assyria. But clearly this relationship came to an end by the time Josiah extended his policies to include parts of Northern Israel, which had been an Assyrian province since 722. According to Cogan and Tadmor, Assyria lost control of Judah and Samaria between the 630s and 625.<sup>68</sup> It may be the case that since Josiah's accession, Assyria's own problems produced a gradual decline in its control of Southern Palestine. While there is no statement dealing with the withholding of tribute, the measures in 23:4ff suggest an outward repudiation of Assyria, and it is plausible that Josiah's twelfth year (628) marked the point at which the gradual diminishing of Assyria's ability to exert its will over Judah caused the reformers at the court to feel

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<sup>66</sup>Cf. Cogan and Tadmor, 1988, 298.

<sup>67</sup>Malamat, 1953, 27; Bustenay, 456.

<sup>68</sup>Cogan and Tadmor, 1988, 293, 299.

safe enough to make a public repudiation of Assyria. It was acknowledged earlier that the extent of Assyrian religion in Jerusalem has been exaggerated, but it has been noted that the horses and chariots of the sun (23:11) indicate the Shamash cult.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the reference to the *manzaltu* (23:5) suggests Akkadian *manzaltu*,<sup>70</sup> and it is known that the Assyrians were enthusiastic about astral cults and astrology.<sup>71</sup> Lohfink has upheld the idea that some of the Assyrian cult presence in Jerusalem was the result of "official imposition."<sup>72</sup> Thus scholars are right to see in the cult reforms the repudiation of Assyria itself.<sup>73</sup> While it has been proposed that Josiah was simply removing obsolete cults,<sup>74</sup> the intensity of the actions- crushing, burning, defiling, etc., suggests that pent-up frustration was being vented, and a defiant statement being made. This violent treatment of symbols of Assyrian greatness suggests a clear break with Judah's former masters.

It has also been proposed that a significant political factor is linked to Josiah's internal political situation, i.e. centralisation of the cult would have the effect of strengthening the power of the government in Jerusalem by making the capital the religious focal point of the nation.<sup>75</sup> This can be linked to the internal party strife which dominated since the reign of Ahaz. Since Josiah's twelfth year, the Yahweh-alone movement controlled the nation's legally recognised religion, and thus could use it to enforce their religious creed on the general population. Also, the intensity with which the reforms were carried out, combined with the desecration of the shrines, may indicate an attempt to eliminate the basis of the syncretistic view of religion, and thereby emasculate the opposition. Given the severity of Manasseh's treatment of the Yahwistic opposition, it is hardly surprising that the strict Yahwists would attack the foundations of the syncretistic view of religion, i.e. the *bamoth*.

Both internal and external political concerns meet in the actions taken in Northern Israel. The account of this appears in 23: 15-20,

<sup>69</sup>Hobbs, 1985, 335; Albertz, 1994, 198; Uehlinger, 70ff.

<sup>70</sup>Cogan and Tadmor, 1988, 286; Zatelli, 94f.

<sup>71</sup>Saggs, 1984, 220ff.

<sup>72</sup>Lohfink, 1987, 467f.

<sup>73</sup>Nicholson, 1963/4, 81f; G. H. Jones, 603f.

<sup>74</sup>Uehlinger, 70ff.

<sup>75</sup>Levin, 1984, 351ff; Niehr, 33ff.



and links up with the Josiah-prophecy in 1 Ki. 13: 1-3 involving Jeroboam's altar in Bethel. The connection with the latter does not cast doubt on Josiah's inclusion of Bethel in his policies, since it is clear that 2 Ki. 23: 16-18, which refers specifically to 1 Ki. 13: 1-3, is a later insertion disturbing an original connection between 23:15 and vv. 19f.<sup>76</sup> Moreover, it was the historically reliable actions taken at Bethel which prompted the production of the secondary material on this subject. Scholars have rightly seen in these actions a claim to control over at least part of the north, which required eliminating significant shrines which competed with Zion.<sup>77</sup> Moreover, Hezekiah had earlier asserted authority over the north, and thus commentators have rightly suggested that Josiah was re-asserting Judahite control over the north which had originally been established by his great-grandfather,<sup>78</sup> and the use of Hezekiah as a role-model for the young Josiah was discussed earlier (see chapter two). While the statement in 23:19a that Josiah removed *all* the shrines in the region of Samaria may well be an exaggeration, nevertheless the idea that he moved beyond the *bamah* at Bethel is plausible,<sup>79</sup> since he was seeking to eliminate cult centres which rivaled Jerusalem. By attempting to impose a strict Yahwist religion on the northerners, combined with the anti-Assyrian implications of his earlier actions, Josiah was seeking the same result as in Judah, i.e. to make the out-lying areas dependent upon his government in Jerusalem. This has implications for his foreign policy, in that he was laying claim to a long-established Assyrian province, and as Weinfeld has noted, strengthening the position of the capital in the minds of the population would increase their resolve to defend it in case of invasion.<sup>80</sup> There is also the element of territorial expansion possibly motivated by the ideal of the larger, Davidic kingdom, and there are indications that Josiah was also extending his dominion westward as well.<sup>81</sup> It has been claimed by some scholars who uphold the Chronicler's chronology and Josiah's involvement in the north that the latter development

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<sup>76</sup>Eynikel, 287.

<sup>77</sup>Weinfeld, 1964, 206.

<sup>78</sup>Todd, 292f.

<sup>79</sup>The reliability of 23:19f is upheld by Wolff, 288f, 290f.

<sup>80</sup>Weinfeld, 1964, 205f.

<sup>81</sup>Naveh, 98f.

must have taken place at a later stage, i.e. after 622.<sup>82</sup> The only plausible reason for this view is the idea that, since the north was an Assyrian province, Josiah's incursions should be dated closer to the collapse of Assyria. But this is tenuous for two reasons. First, if he felt secure enough to renounce Assyrian vassalage by his actions in Jerusalem, there would be no reason why he should postpone implementing his plans for the north. Secondly, Assurbanipal died in 627 (see chapter three), and the chaos in Assyria would have provided a good background for taking over control of the north. Thus Josiah's intervention in the north can be dated to the period 627-622, which is consistent with the implications of 2 Chr. 34: 3-8, but without holding that Josiah did this as an Assyrian vassal.<sup>83</sup> The implementation of the strict Yahwists' religious views and the repudiation of Assyrian cultic elements, along with the anti-Assyrian attitude of the Yahweh-alone movement, favours the view that 628 marked a clear break with Assyria. However, the process of consolidating his authority in the north may have taken place throughout Josiah's reign. The political factors discussed above provide an important impetus for the reforms, and are not dependent upon a law book.

## 2. Religious and Ideological Factors.

In addition to the political motivations, those concerning the cult should not be underestimated. Besides the general awareness that in the ancient Near East there was no separation of the religious and political aspects of society, the context described earlier emphasised the conflict between the strict Yahwists and syncretists. This strife presupposes a religious creed which would have provided sufficient motivation for the destruction of the outward manifestations of syncretism. Some scholars who uphold the Chronicler's chronology of the reforms would nonetheless maintain that the removal of the *bamoth* represents a phase which followed the discovery of the law book.<sup>84</sup> However this is tenuous, since it would seem to presuppose that Josiah's actions required the

<sup>82</sup>Fohrer, 1974, 10; Gray, 1977, 714, 735.

<sup>83</sup>So Wolff, 291; Cogan and Tadmor, 1988, 299, *pace* Oestreicher, 56f; Cross and Freedman, 57.

<sup>84</sup>Jepsen, 108; Nicholson, 1963/4, 82.

demand for cultic centralisation in Deuteronomy. But it was noted earlier that Hezekiah had moved against the *bamoth* (2 Ki. 18:4), and the discussion in chapter five of this study will uphold the veracity of this. It was also proposed earlier that Hezekiah was the model chosen for the young Josiah by the Yahwistic faction at the court, and thus a suitable historical precedent existed for Josiah. This, combined with the political and economic factors in favour of centralisation, and the fact the ideological views of the Yahwists would have been incompatible with the type of cult practised at the *bamoth*, suggests that the law book of 622 was not needed as an impetus for centralisation of the cult. A frontal assault against the syncretism which bolstered the opposition and offended the strict Yahwists' view of religion, would have necessitated such an action.

### 3. Economic Factors.

Some scholars have noted that the various *bamoth*, as religious centres of the community, would have received considerable income from the local population in the form of tithes, gifts, contributions, etc., which would have gone to maintain their functionaries and services. The large number of such shrines would have meant that a significant amount of income was going somewhere other than Jerusalem. Thus by closing down these shrines, their income and possessions could be redirected to Jerusalem, and thereby placed at the disposal of the royal government.<sup>85</sup> The effect of this would not only be to make more resources available to the capital, but it would also contribute to strengthening the political power in Jerusalem as well.

## VI. Implications of the Chronicler's Chronology.

The above discussion of the motivations underlying the reforms of Josiah suggests that there are good reasons to accept the Chronicler's depiction of reforms beginning in Josiah's twelfth year, roughly four years after he began to show that the influence of the Yahwistic court faction had made a clear impact upon him, i.e. his eighth year. Besides the Passover celebration, which 23:21

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<sup>85</sup>Claburn, 11ff; cf. also Niehr, 33ff.

specifically connects with the law book, nothing found in 23: 4-20 requires Deuteronomy, including centralisation of the cult. Thus it is not surprising that this section makes no reference to the book, nor to Josiah's eighteenth year. The conclusion to be reached here is that those scholars are correct who attempt to understand Jeremiah's earlier activity in a historical context in which Josiah's reforms began before the discovery of the law book.<sup>86</sup>

However, this conclusion requires that a few comments be made about two issues directly affected by it. The first issue concerns whether 2 Ki. 22f indicates that its writer believed that the reforms of 23: 4-20 actually followed the events of 622. The most plausible position is that the original Deuteronomistic author did not believe this, and the position which will be taken in chapter two, i.e. that the account of Josiah's reign was produced toward the end of Jehoiakim's reign, requires this, since the author would have been contemporary with the events. The current arrangement of 2 Ki. 22f is to be explained as the result of one stage of composition, and two stages of subsequent redactional activity. The original writer placed 22:3-23:3, 21-23 in front of 23: 4-20 for a theological reason, not a chronological one, namely Josiah's reaction to the law book was the most important thing, and in order to emphasise this to the audience it was placed first.<sup>87</sup> However, the current location of vv. 21-23, which, as noted earlier, is not original, results from a redactor who misunderstood the arrangement of the two parts to be chronological. He moved vv. 21-23 to its current place both to emphasise this, and to form an *inclusio* between 22:3 and 23:23, based on the reference to Josiah's eighteenth year. This leaves 23:24, which mentions Josiah taking action against those who consulted spiritists, and then links all anti-idolatry actions to the book of 622. A couple of observations can be made here. First, the actions mentioned are clearly out of place, and would properly belong in 23: 4-14. 23:24 gives the appearance of being a footnote making up for something perceived to be lacking elsewhere. This suggests that it is a gloss. Furthermore, the wording of the reference to the law book in 24b ("the book which Hilkiah the priest found") is not found elsewhere, and the connecting of the book with Hilkiah

<sup>86</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 22f; Bright, 1965, XXXVIIIff; 1981, 317ff; Fohrer, 1969, 56; 1974, 51; Thompson, 19, 98.

<sup>87</sup>So Rose, 53f.



suggests that it is dependent upon 22:8f, i.e. the first part of the larger narrative. Thus 23:24 is an addition, and by a later hand than that which moved 23: 21-23 to its current place, since if the redactor responsible for the latter wished to make such a statement as found in 24b, he would have placed it after 23:20, if not after 23:14. But this second redactor clearly shared the incorrect view of the first redactor, i.e. that the cultic reforms took place after the law book's appearance in 622, as 24b clearly shows.

The question of the identity of the law book also becomes relevant. The dominant view among scholars is that this book was some form of Deuteronomy. But if the Chronicler is correct, and the reforms of 23: 4-20 occurred *before* 622, then the usual manner of substantiating the former view is lost, i.e. one cannot point out the various reform elements, above all cult centralisation, and match them with the provisions of Deuteronomy. This raises the question as to whether Deuteronomy in some form was the book of 622. A notable trend in scholarship denies this equation, mainly as a result of the supposition that Deuteronomy was not produced until the post-exilic period.<sup>88</sup> But it has also been suggested that the document of 622 was only Deut. 32, since following Chronicles, and supposing that some part of Deuteronomy was needed to prompt the pre-622 cultic reforms, it is reckoned that Deuteronomy must have been available earlier in Josiah's reign.<sup>89</sup> A discussion of Deuteronomy's date appears in chapter two, but the implications of accepting the Chronicler's chronology for the identification of the law book requires a few observations. The proposal regarding Deut. 32 is tenuous, since it is based on the view that Deuteronomy was needed to provoke the pre-622 reforms, and the discussion in section V argued that this is not the case. As for the denial of a pre-exilic origination of Deuteronomy, it can be said that it is based on three main points, all of which are open to question. The attempt to show that various stipulations in Deuteronomy cannot be pre-exilic is particularly precarious, since, as Budde shows, equally plausible arguments can be made in favour of a pre-exilic origination, although it will be readily admitted that late insertions reflecting later periods are present. Budde has also rightly explained that the

<sup>88</sup>See footnotes 53-54, and Hölscher, 1922, 227ff; Kennett, 1906, 481ff; Burkitt, 166f; Handy, 1994, 46 (fn. 18).

<sup>89</sup>Lundbom, 1976, 293ff; 1992, 685f.



fact that Deuteronomy addresses "all Israel" rather than just "Judah," is due to the fact that it is depicted as a speech of Moses, who would have to have addressed "all Israel."<sup>90</sup> Finally, while it can be held that Deuteronomy is idealistic or utopian, this has no bearing on its date. History is full of examples of reformers, reform movements, policies, and revolutions which proved to be unrealistic in various aspects, and occasioned revision, reversal, or reaction. Reformers tend to be ideological and idealistic in general, and the context of Judah's factional strife, in which the Deuteronomic traditions were fostered by one element in the conflict, made it particularly conducive to the production of a polarised view.

But there are a few positive indicators which suggest that the equating of Deuteronomy and the law book of 622 is correct: 2 Ki. 23: 21-23 specifically links the holding of Passover in Jerusalem with the law book, clearly suggesting Deut. 16:1ff, as opposed to the pre-Deuteronomic method of observance; the threats which so troubled Josiah (22:16f) suggest Deut. 28, which also made an impact on Jeremiah (i.e. Jer. 11:1ff, see chapter six); the expression *סֵפֶר הַחֻקִּים* in 2 Ki. 22:8 suggests the designation given to Deuteronomy in 28:61; 31:26. Finally, it should be noted that the pre-exilic author of 2 Ki. 22f, writing not long after Josiah's reign, clearly believed the law book was Deuteronomy. This is obvious from the assessment found in 2 Ki. 23:25, where Josiah is lauded as one who turned to Yahweh "with all his heart, with all his soul, and with all his might." This is clearly based on Deut. 6:5, and the fact that the writer's prime concern in the Josiah narrative is the king's response to the book, produces a reliable indication that the book of 622 was some form of Deuteronomy. Thus one is justified in following the standard identification of the law book with Deuteronomy, and the chronology of Josiah's reign as found in 2 Chr. 34.

## VII. The Fate of the Reforms Under Jehoiakim.

Following the premature death of Josiah at the hands of Pharaoh Necho II in 609, the "people of the land" intervened again and

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<sup>90</sup>Budde, 1926, 206ff.

placed Jehoahaz on the throne. The cycle of reforming and reactionary kings concludes with the death of Josiah. It may be that the dramatic death of Josiah severely discredited the Yahweh-alone groups.<sup>91</sup> The fact that Jeremiah would shortly be advocating submission to Babylon, particularly after formerly having criticised Judah for vacillating between Assyria and Egypt (2:18f), supports the idea that there was a change in the thinking of Yahwists after Josiah's death. The reason for the people of the land choosing Jehoahaz might be that he intended to follow the pro-independence policies of his father, and oppose Necho's plans for Judah.<sup>92</sup> Necho's removal of Jehoahaz ended this possibility. Nonetheless he is condemned by DtrG, as are his successors Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim are accused of doing as their fathers had done (23:32, 37), and Jehoiachin and Zedekiah are accused of following the policies of Jehoiakim (24:9, 19). This judgement would seem to indicate that Jehoiakim followed a radically different policy than his father.

Politically speaking, this would seem to be true. The fact that Jehoiakim was specifically chosen by Necho to be king suggests that it was well-known that he was pro-Egyptian, and scholars have noted that, despite the temporary necessity of accepting Babylonian vassalage, he appears to have supported ties with Egypt in general.<sup>93</sup> The fact that he revolted against Babylon as soon as Egypt was able to halt the Babylonian advance<sup>94</sup> suggests that this is true. Given Jeremiah's statements about Egypt (2:18f, 36f), this would place him in opposition to Jehoiakim.

But his pro-Egyptian policy does not explain the judgement in 2 Ki. 23:37. The condemnation of a Judahite king by stating that he had done evil like his *fathers* does not appear elsewhere. The comparison with the king's *father* is fairly common, but primarily with good kings (Jehoshaphat, Amaziah, Azariah, and Jotham). Only Abijam is compared to his father Rehoboam in his wickedness. Obviously, the writer of 23:37 could not do this, since Jehoiakim's father was Josiah. The reference to his fathers suggests his predecessors in general, naturally excluding Hezekiah and

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<sup>91</sup>Bright, 1981, 326.

<sup>92</sup>Seitz, 1989, 83f.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid.

<sup>94</sup>Miller and Hayes, 406f.

Josiah, but the fact that no list of cultic transgressions is provided for him suggests that he is not being equated with kings such as Ahaz and Manasseh.

The conclusion which can be reached is that Jehoiakim was somehow like his predecessors, yet somehow different. The charge that "he did evil in the sight of Yahweh" in DtrG normally indicates religious policies disliked by the Deuteronomistic redactors, and since the writer of the history covering Manasseh up to Jehoiakim is pre-exilic (see chapter two), the author must be associating syncretistic religion with Jehoiakim's reign. It has been objected that Jeremiah never accuses Jehoiakim directly of cultic sins.<sup>95</sup> However, there are indications that syncretism returned under Jehoiakim, particularly in Ezekiel. It has been noted that in Ezek. 8, the prophet relates a vision describing various pagan practises in the temple.<sup>96</sup> It is true that Ezekiel began his activity after Jehoiakim's death, and one must exercise care when dealing with a vision like that in Ezek. 8. However, the basic ideas expressed in Ezek. 8 may simply be based on Ezekiel's familiarity with religious conditions in the capital at the time he was exiled, and presented in the form of a vision. Of course the time at which he left Judah was the time of Jehoiakim and Jehoiachin. Thus despite the date of the vision (Zedekiah's eighth year), and the vision format, the observations in Ezek. 8 can be taken to reveal information about the situation in Jehoiakim's reign. This is consistent with 2 Ki. 24:19, which claims that Zedekiah followed the policies of his brother. Moreover, as will be discussed in chapter six, Jer. 11: 1-8 can be seen as an endorsement of Deuteronomy by Jeremiah in 622, and 11:9ff, which accuses Judah of a conspiracy against Yahweh and a return to earlier ways, accords with the supposition that Jehoiakim's reign marked a return to syncretistic practises.

At the same time, the nature of the condemnation in 2 Ki. 23:32 and 37, and the lack of specific charges of cultic sins against Jehoiakim, argues against him having *officially* reversed the reforms of Josiah.<sup>97</sup> It will be maintained in chapter seven that Jer. 17:1ff indicates that toward the end of Josiah's reign, popular yearning for pre-reform practices became apparent in Judah. The fact that

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<sup>95</sup>Albertz, 1994, 366 (fn. 2).

<sup>96</sup>Volz, 1928, XXXf; Bright, 1965, XLVII.

<sup>97</sup>Pace Volz, 1928, 130f.

Jehoiakim not only owed his accession purely to the Egyptians, but also that he appears to have been skipped over intentionally in favour of Jehoahaz immediately after Josiah's death, combined with the undoubtedly unpopular tribute he had to raise for the Egyptians (2 Ki. 23:35) and his oppressive manner of ruling (Jer. 22:13ff), makes it plausible that in order to retain the throne in Judah, he simply implemented a policy of "laissez faire" in cultic matters.<sup>98</sup> Thus while he himself may not have been a syncretist, other considerations prompted him to allow the return of the pre-reform practices, which thereby marked the end of the Josianic reforms, but without Jehoiakim directly and officially reversing these reforms in the way Manasseh did with Hezekiah's reforms. Therefore scholars are right to speak of a "lapse" of the reforms under Jehoiakim.<sup>99</sup>

#### VIII. Conclusion.

The conclusion to be reached from the discussion in this chapter is that the reforms of Josiah began well before the year 622, when some form of Deuteronomy was presented to the king. These reforms included the purification of Judah's cult in general, and the destruction of Assyrian cultic elements was intended as a dramatic, public repudiation of Assyrian domination. But cultic centralisation took place prior to 622 as well, stemming from several factors including the precedent of Hezekiah, internal and external political considerations, cultic and ideological issues, and economic advantages. The difference between the current form of 2 Ki. 22f and 2 Chr. 34 as regards chronology, is the result of the Deuteronomistic writer wishing to emphasise Josiah's reaction to Deuteronomy, and thus this was placed first. Finally, although Jehoiakim did not officially reverse the reforms of Josiah, his precarious claim to the throne combined with his unpopularity, supports the idea that he allowed the people of Judah the freedom to do as they wished in cultic matters, representing a response to popular feeling which had been growing since the end of Josiah's reign. Therefore this study will attempt to understand the message

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<sup>98</sup>Rowley, 1950, 168.

<sup>99</sup>Thompson, 23; Berridge, "Jehoiakim," 1992, 665.

of Jeremiah in light of a cultic reform process which began in 628, and took a dramatic turn with the appearance of Deuteronomy in 622.



# CHAPTER 2

## THE PROSE SERMONS OF JEREMIAH

### I. Introduction.

The topic of this chapter is the material in Jeremiah often associated with exilic or post-exilic Deuteronomistic sources, i.e. the prose sermons of Jeremiah, which show great similarities with both Deuteronomy, as well as the speeches which the authors of DtrG have placed in the mouths of various important persons at significant moments of history. These similarities, which include style, vocabulary, and theology, have led many to deny the prose sermons in Jeremiah to the prophet, and to link them with later Deuteronomistic redactors, i.e. those who have been significantly influenced by the ideas and theology of the Deuteronomists. This issue is particularly significant, since several texts which will be discussed later, one of which is central to the topic of this dissertation (11:1ff), are relevant here. This chapter will argue that the prose sermons, henceforth designated as *Kunstprosa* following Weippert's preferred terminology,<sup>1</sup> are in fact a *Gattung* which was used in two other pre-exilic, Judahite literary works, namely Deuteronomy and DtrG, and therefore was a common form in seventh-sixth century Judah. Thus the *Kunstprosa* should be

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<sup>1</sup>Weippert, 1973, 80; Holladay, 1986, 570.

regarded as a *Gattung* which Jeremiah utilised at various times of his prophetic career.

## II. The Book of Jeremiah and the Deuteronomistic-Redaction Theory.

### 1. The Development of the Theory.

Some of the ideas of the theory of a Deuteronomistic redaction of the book of Jeremiah have their roots in Giesebrecht's 1894 commentary, where an attempt is made to assign the material in the book to three authorial sources: Jeremiah, Baruch, and redactors (*Bearbeiter*). But rather than explain the development of the book from the combining of sources, he regards the book as the result of the original scroll of 605 (36:1ff) having received at least six stages of expansion. As concerns the work of the redactors, he sees this as beginning in the post-exilic period, and lasting over a long time. He does not make any suggestions about the identity of these *Bearbeiter*, nor does he define their goal in expanding the book. But he does suggest that they not only transplanted material from one part of the book to another, they also composed their own sections. More importantly, he posits two basic styles in the book; the highly creative poetry of Jeremiah, and an inferior style characterised as lacking freshness and power, being too broad, monotonous and repetitious, and having the tendency to lose the poetic form. However, he does not link this inferior style with the redactors, opting to make Baruch responsible for it.<sup>2</sup> This judgement of a style which is perceived to be of poor quality, and the decision to attribute it to someone other than Jeremiah, became widely accepted among scholars.

It was Duhm's work in 1901 which changed the nature of the study of Jeremiah on this subject. He posits the same basic authors as responsible for the current book of Jeremiah as Giesebrecht. However, he forwards the idea that two sources, a collection of Jeremiah's poetic oracles and a collection of biographical narratives produced by Baruch, had been worked together by redactors. He also dramatically increases the amount of material regarded as

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<sup>2</sup>Giesebrecht, 1894, XIV-XIX. See also 1907, XX-XXV, where the influence of Duhm is reflected.

secondary, attributing to the prophet only that material written in Qinah-metre. Roughly 280 passages are assigned to Jeremiah, 220 to Baruch, and 850 to subsequent expansionists (*Ergänzer*). For Duhm, Jeremiah was predominantly a lyricist or poet, and prose cannot be credited to him. It was after the two sources were joined together that scribes accelerated the process of adding their own material in the form of the "synagogue sermon," intended to edify post-exilic Jews. Duhm had utter disdain for the literary quality of these sermons, and regarded their authors as devoid of training and talent. This assessment of the relevant material was widely echoed by later scholars. For Duhm, the sermons contain exaggerations, unsuitable forms of address, have a tendency to get carried away, digress from the subject of the text being expanded, exaggerate the moral sinfulness of pre-exilic Israel and Judah, and directly borrow from works such as Deuteronomy, Ezekiel, Deutero-Isaiah, and Trito-Isaiah. But it was not only in literary quality that the *Ergänzungen* represent an antithesis to the genuine Jeremiah, since their respective views of religion were also important. The *Ergänzer* focused on the Deuteronomic and Priestly law, and were given to portraying Jeremiah as a teacher of torah and a scribe, i.e. emphasising a legal righteousness. As a contrast, Jeremiah's view of religion was a purely inward experience which centred on the individual's personal relationship with God, free of external constraints. Significantly, he linked the theological perspective of the *Ergänzer* with works produced by those influenced by Deuteronomy. However, he tends to describe these *Ergänzer* very vaguely, maintaining that their work was carried out piecemeal over a long period of time.<sup>3</sup>

In 1914, Mowinckel proposed that Jer. 1-45 is comprised of four, well-defined written sources. The presence of many parallel texts and frequent repetitions, as well as the remarkable lack of plan and structure in some parts of the book, led Mowinckel to conclude that different writers dealt with the same events and oracles, and this was linked to the existence of different sources. It is also with Mowinckel that specific sigla were used to denote the various sources. Source A contained the material which is closest to the *ipsissima verba* of Jeremiah, and most of it is characterised by being

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<sup>3</sup>Duhm, 1901, X-XX.

composed in metre or rhythm. Its redactor (R<sup>A</sup>) was predominantly a collector, and thus editorial intervention is minimal. On the other hand, the redactor of source B (R<sup>B</sup>), comprised of narrative accounts of the events which led to Jeremiah's prophetic announcements, was a professional writer of fables, who composed the narratives which Giesebrecht and Duhm attributed to Baruch, utilising earlier written sources and oral tradition. Mowinckel's third, and most important, source is that designated as C; the great speeches (*Reden*) of Jeremiah, in which the predominant *Gattung* is that of the *Scheltrede*. But his most significant point is that the C-material is thoroughly Deuteronomistic, identifying it with the characteristics of the Deuteronomistic historical work, and the corresponding parts of Deuteronomy. He points to the many similarities between both: vocabulary, style, characteristic and repeated phraseology, an emphasis on *Reden* placed in the mouth of a great figure from Israelite history, and important ideological parallels. In both works there is the tendency to dwell on Judah's history of continual sin, especially idolatry. There is also a rigid conception of a fixed written law, and the distinctly Deuteronomistic conception of the prophet as a preacher and pastor who extols the written torah. Mowinckel regards this as an unhistorical, late development, and like Duhm, regards the *Kunstprosa* both to be of inferior quality, as well as having no relevance to the views of the real Jeremiah. Source C is either Palestinian or Babylonian in origin, and is no older than Ezra, providing a *terminus a quo* of ca. 400. The fourth source is D, consisting of Jer. 30-31, and represents a collection of oracles of various dates, none of which are by Jeremiah, combined with different layers of literary and editorial work. Source C came to be incorporated into the book in the following manner. R<sup>A</sup> used the expanded *Urrolle* produced by Jeremiah himself as he combined Jeremianic oracles with a few redactional elements. A later writer (R<sup>B</sup>) created a collection of historical narratives from oral stories about the prophet. This produced source B. Then R<sup>C</sup> arranged a series of *Reden* placed in the prophet's mouth, resulting in the origination of source C. Subsequently R<sup>AB</sup> joined sources A and B together, altering very little. Then R<sup>J</sup> (R<sup>ABC</sup>) worked source C into the current book of Jeremiah, which consisted at the time of the first two sources. Some time later, R<sup>D</sup> redacted the anonymous collection designated source D, though it was still independent.

Finally, R<sup>ABCD</sup> regarded source D as the words of Jeremiah, and inserted it into the book A, B, and C. Later insertions, most noticeably chapters 46-52, occurred subsequently.<sup>4</sup>

While Mowinckel's approach to the *Prosareden* is an intriguing one, it is not the one which will be adopted in this chapter (see Section V). At the same time, it should be noted that Mowinckel later modified his own position on this issue. Rather than holding to a view of the *Prosareden* as comprising a uniform, literary source, he later viewed them as a "tradition complex," representing a separate, originally oral, development of basic sayings and themes derived from the historical Jeremiah within Deuteronomistic circles. This parallel tradition was later fixed in writing, and subsequently incorporated into the book of Jeremiah.<sup>5</sup>

After Mowinckel, the possibility was raised that the Deuteronomistic school redacted the entire book, rather than just one source. This was suggested by Skinner,<sup>6</sup> and discussed further by Rudolph. The latter upheld three of Mowinckel's sources: A, B, and C, and that the latter is comprised of prose speeches having passed through a Deuteronomistic redaction. He also returned to the view that source B should be connected with Baruch, suggested earlier by Duhm and Giesebrecht, and allows for some prose to have been produced by Jeremiah. However, the most notable feature with Rudolph is that the prose sermons in source C are not merely free compositions. Instead, they represent genuine statements of Jeremiah which have been reshaped and reworked by Deuteronomistic redactors. For Rudolph, this explains both the presence of the first person in the material, as well as the features traditionally associated with the Deuteronomistic school. He shares Duhm's low opinion of the *Kunstprosa*, but while it does sometimes express opinions which are not consistent with those of the prophet, it often encapsulates Jeremiah's own views, and thus can be used in the study of his message. Unlike previous scholars, he set the work of the Deuteronomistic group in the exilic period, but nonetheless upholds the link with the synagogue, as suggested by Duhm. As noted above, he also raises the possibility that those responsible for source C also redacted the whole book. The piece

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<sup>4</sup>Mowinckel, 1913, 5ff.

<sup>5</sup>Mowinckel, 1946, 62ff.

<sup>6</sup>Skinner, 1948, 102, 170.



21: 1-10 is significant for Rudolph on this point, since he attributes it to the final redactor of the book. While he prefers to assign it to source C, he also suggests that it is possible that it represents an imitation of the Deuteronomistic producers of source C.<sup>7</sup> Nonetheless, the idea that the Deuteronomistic school was responsible for redacting the whole book of Jeremiah was taken up and furthered at the next stage of the development of the Deuteronomistic redaction theory.

This can be seen clearly in the work of Hyatt. While he upholds the idea that the current book of Jeremiah is the result of the combination of three sources: the second edition of the *Urrolle*, a collection of oracles gathered by Baruch, and Baruch's memoirs, a Deuteronomistic source like that of Mowinckel and Rudolph is dropped. Instead, he posits that the Deuteronomistic exilic redactors who produced DtrG were responsible for editing the book of Jeremiah as a whole. This work was done ca. 550 in Egypt, and their methodology included rewriting older material, providing a framework for various material, and composing their own pieces. In contrast to Rudolph, Hyatt maintains that the real views of Jeremiah only occasionally are retained in their work. While he views the style as monotonous, he does credit it with "great beauty" at times. For Hyatt, this theory explains the similarity in style, vocabulary, and theology between the *Kunstprosa* of Jeremiah and DtrG. However, he also precisely describes the goals of this redaction. The first involves representing Jeremiah as active before 622, when he really did not appear until Jehoiakim's reign (see chapter three). Secondly, it emphasises pre-Deuteronomic cultic sins during Jeremiah's early activity. Thirdly, it inserts material to make Jeremiah look as though he supported Deuteronomy and the Josianic reforms, when he really was opposed to both. This supposed opposition was the result of two very different concepts of the nature of "torah." While the Deuteronomic movement defined it as a set of written legislation, Jeremiah regarded it as the living word of the prophets as represented by the ethical Decalogue of the Mosaic period. Thus the Deuteronomistic school sought to alter Jeremiah's definition of torah to accord with its own. Fourth, it seeks to explain the exile as

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<sup>7</sup>Rudolph, 1947, XIII-XIX; 1968, XIV-XXI.

the result of worshipping foreign gods. Fifth, material predicting the restoration from exile was added. Finally, additions were made to show that Jeremiah was familiar with the laws of Deuteronomy. In short, the exilic Deuteronomistic school sought to falsify the image and message of the real Jeremiah in order to represent the foe of their ideology as an ally. Thus for Hyatt, their activity was retrospective in nature, i.e. focused on the record of the past, rather than on the concerns and issues confronting the exilic or post-exilic Jewish community. But most importantly, the idea that the Deuteronomistic redactors were the editors of the whole book working with specific goals while producing their own edition of Jeremiah, came to be developed into a comprehensive theory.<sup>8</sup>

A significant further development of this theory appeared with Herrmann. While he also emphasises the role of the Deuteronomistic circle in the current book of Jeremiah, he does not hold to such an extensive redaction of Jer. 1-45 as others. In contrast to Hyatt, he maintains that its concern is not retrospective, but rather focuses on the concerns of the exilic/late-exilic community. He forwards a theory of the Deuteronomistic-Deuteronomistic movement developing in three stages. In Deuteronomy, the theological standard (*Ordnung*) to which the Deuteronomistic circle subscribed is set forth. In DtrG, this *Ordnung* is applied to Israel's history, and in Jeremiah, it is forwarded as the *Zukunftsordnung* which the people must strive to obtain. Thus the Deuteronomistic work in Jeremiah represents the activity of a specific branch of the movement, and displays a particular type of Deuteronomistic idiom. The possibility of achieving the *Zukunftsordnung* is emphasised in the oracles of deliverance, which, although for the most part not from Jeremiah, nonetheless utilise genuine prophetic traditions. But two other aspects in Herrmann's work are significant. First, he not only follows Hyatt in explaining the contribution of the Deuteronomistic circle as a redactional process rather than the production of a literary source, he also blurs the distinction between the *Kunstprosa* and the prose narratives, maintaining that the former requires a narrative context.<sup>9</sup> Secondly, he does not see the style of the

<sup>8</sup>Hyatt, 1941, 381ff; 1942, 156ff; 1956, 787ff; 1984, 247ff.

<sup>9</sup>Such a distinction was denied earlier by May, 1942, 139ff.

*Prosareden* as a purely literary phenomenon, but rather as a method of preaching which developed as oral tradition, and only later became fixed in writing. But more importantly, the *Kunstprosa* style is linked with a change in prophecy in the seventh-sixth centuries, whereby the older prophetic style was developing into the prose-sermon format. Thus for Herrmann, the characteristics usually associated with the *Kunstprosa* were already developing when Jeremiah was active. This is significant, since while Rudolph upholds the existence of genuine statements of Jeremiah at the basis of the prose sermons, Herrmann further strengthens a potential link between the prophet and this *Gattung* in relation to style and form as well. In effect, Herrmann is acknowledging that Jeremiah must reflect to some extent the time in which he lived. Nonetheless, he accepts the idea that the *Prosareden* express the views of the Deuteronomistic circle, not Jeremiah.<sup>10</sup>

The contributions made by Nicholson to the development of the theory are based on suggestions of predecessors. First, he follows Herrmann in seeing the Deuteronomistic prose sermons as representing a final written deposit of an originally oral preaching tradition, which, like Duhm, he links to the synagogue. For Nicholson, this tradition was aimed at exhorting the exilic Jewish community to live by the demands of torah. His second notable conclusion is that there is no difference between the prose sermons of Mowinckel's source C, and the prose narratives of what had been designated source B. He argues that the prose narratives are not biographical accounts of particular events in Jeremiah's life, but rather make important theological statements. The latter often involve vividly depicting the rejection of Yahweh's word, which the Deuteronomistic circle sought to represent to the exilic community as the reason for the catastrophes of 722 and 587. The intention of this was to reinforce further their assertion that faithfulness to the law was the people's only hope. Thus for Nicholson, the Deuteronomistic redaction theory explains not only similarities in style, vocabulary, and content, but equally as important, similar theology. But it should be noted that like Rudolph, Nicholson maintains that the prose tradition in Jeremiah is often based on genuine material, and contains valid historical information.

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<sup>10</sup>Herrmann, 1965, 189-193, 235-237; 1987, 526, 578; 1990, 74-87.

Nonetheless, in its current form, it represents a series of edificatory sermons.<sup>11</sup>

Thiel's main contribution to the theory was a detailed examination of the principles and methods of the redactional processes used by the Deuteronomistic school, including a full linguistic analysis. Otherwise, he built on the ideas of his predecessors. He assumes that the *Prosareden* format cannot be attributed to Jeremiah because earlier prophets did not use it, and because the use of such speeches is one of the defining characteristics of the Deuteronomistic school. He also holds that the Deuteronomistic redaction of the book (Jer. 1-45) was the main one, i.e. the one which collected the various traditions, and first created that which can be called a book of Jeremiah. However, the extent of Deuteronomistic intervention differs considerably throughout it. Rejecting source-criticism, he posits that the redactors combined existing traditions, reworked them, and also added their own compositions. However, genuine material from Jeremiah underlies much of their work. The difference in wording between DtrG and Jeremiah is explained as the latter representing a special genre of Deuteronomistic literature. The purpose of the redaction was to shape the present by forwarding obedience to the Deuteronomic law as the exilic community's only hope for deliverance in the future. While he acknowledges that Deuteronomistic material is found in the biographical material, he does not deny that some distinction is to be made between Deuteronomistic texts and narrative texts, since the Deuteronomistic work in the text can be separated from the older narratives. Finally, like Herrmann and Nicholson, Thiel believes that there is an exilic preaching practise underlying the written Deuteronomistic sermons, discerning two specific forms of this: alternative preaching, and two types of the question-and-answer style.<sup>12</sup>

Before moving on, it should be noted that in more recent scholarship, the existence of a Deuteronomistic redaction of Jeremiah is generally accepted, but exception is taken to a monolithic or systematic redaction. McKane and Carroll both stress

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<sup>11</sup>Nicholson, 1970, 4-36; 1973, 10-14; 1975, 10-14.

<sup>12</sup>Thiel, 1973, 3-45, 279-302; 1981, 100-114.



a perceived 'untidiness' of the book. The former prefers to see the book as the result of a "rolling corpus" whereby a core of poetic material has triggered a slow, haphazard supplementation process aimed at presenting a commentary on the text, and which quarries the language and ideas of that material. This explains the differences to be found between the *Prosareden* in Jeremiah and other Deuteronomistic literature. For Carroll, the Deuteronomistic redaction is only one editorial layer among many which reflect the interests and propaganda of various groups competing with one another for influence in the post-exilic community. Both agree that the Deuteronomistic redaction is less comprehensive than earlier commentators thought, and that defining the exact nature of the relationship with other Deuteronomistic works is difficult. Moreover, both sharply disassociate the *Prosareden* from Jeremiah.<sup>13</sup>

## 2. The Four Main Issues Relevant to the Deuteronomistic-Redaction Theory.

In quickly summarising the development of the idea of a Deuteronomistic editing of the Book of Jeremiah, one can note four issues which this theory addresses. The first of these issues is the fact that the *Prosareden* found in the book represent a style or type of writing which is considerably different from the material composed in verse, and somewhat different from the narrative accounts. Thus the idea of a later redaction attempts to explain the appearance of two distinct *Gattungen* by attributing one to Jeremiah, and the other to a different source. The second issue concerns the nature of the relationship between the sermons of Jeremiah and those found in the Deuteronomistic-Deuteronomistic literature. The similarities between the two works is explained by the proponents of a Deuteronomistic redacting process by attributing them to the activity of some stage of the Deuteronomistic movement, and thus accounts for the appearance of the same basic *Gattung* in two different sets of literature. The third issue involves a judgement of the quality of the *Prosareden*. The poetic material in Jeremiah is regarded as being of very high

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<sup>13</sup>McKane, 1981, 220-229, 237; 1986, xliii-lxxxviii; 1996, cxxxiiif, clxxiif; Carroll, 1981, 5-30, 249-268; 1986, 41-80, 126f; 1991, 230-234.



quality, whereas the prose sermons are described as monotonous, using stock vocabulary, devoid of impressive imagery, and dwelling on the nation's punishment being linked to the torah. In short, it is significantly inferior. Thus the Deuteronomistic redaction theory allows scholars to hold an image of Jeremiah as a talented poetic figure, which would be compromised if the *Kunstprosa* were attributed to him. Fourth, positing a later re-working of Jeremiah by a Deuteronomistic school enables many scholars to explain the presence of material which is held to reflect a theological perspective perceived to contradict that of other material found in the book.

In looking at these four issues, it appears that two of them are problematic, due to their purely subjective nature. This is clearly the case with the assertion that one author cannot use more than one style. Such a claim is basically a *petitio principii*,<sup>14</sup> and is unable to be proven. While it has been noted that Jeremiah's predecessors do not use this style,<sup>15</sup> the relevance of this is questionable for two reasons. First, it fails to take into account that every prophetic figure is a different individual, with different predilections and backgrounds, and thus cannot be expected to conform rigidly to the methodology of forerunners. But a second observation is that the *Kunstprosa* style was one which came into vogue in Jeremiah's time, and thus he is the first prophet to use it extensively. Moreover, his priestly background also accounts for his readiness to adopt a style which basically appears within a movement that developed the Deuteronomic law (see section V). The third issue cited above, i.e. that of a personal assessment of the quality of the *Prosareden*, is equally subjective. The elevation of personal preferences to a method of determining authenticity is very pronounced with Duhm, who often attacks material he does not like in quite polemical terms, and his basic views of the quality of the poetry and the *Kunstprosa* has been widely echoed. But clearly a negative assessment of a writer's material is not grounds for the dismissal of its authenticity.<sup>16</sup> But it should also be said that it is essential that one not judge the quality of one *Gattung* by the standards which govern another *Gattung*. Poetry and *Kunstprosa* are two different

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<sup>14</sup>Cornill, 1905, 35.

<sup>15</sup>Thiel, 1973, 5, 7.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. Rowley, 1950, 170.

types of literature, with two different sets of standards. Poetry is the freest style, whereas the *Prosarede* shows itself to be governed by more rigid rules, particularly in relation to syntax and form. The two different types must be judged by their own standards and requirements, as is the case in all creative pursuits which have different genres. As concerns the fourth issue, it should be said that this is really an exegetical matter which depends upon the interpretation taken on the material throughout the book. This requires an examination of all the relevant contexts, and while this is beyond the scope of this study, several texts will be discussed in the following chapters as pertains to Jeremiah and the Josianic reform movement. Finally, it is the second issue, i.e. explaining the appearance of the same *Gattung* in Deuteronomy, DtrG, and Jeremiah, which is the most important. The answer to this quandary is provided by the fact that both the development of the Deuteronomic tradition and the production of DtrG on the one hand, and the use of prose sermons by Jeremiah on the other, were contemporaneous, and thus reflect a style commonly used in seventh-sixth century Judah. In what follows, the origination of the Deuteronomic tradition and DtrG will be discussed generally, and it will be argued that both were in existence in the pre-exilic period.

### III. The Deuteronomistic Historical Work.

#### 1. Introduction.

The question of the origin of DtrG is a very complicated one. A full examination of this issue is beyond the scope of this study, but a position must be taken, since it relates significantly to explaining why the *Prosareden* appear in both DtrG and Jeremiah. Thus a few observations will be made on the origin of the Deuteronomistic historical work. However, one may reject the proposal that either Jeremiah,<sup>17</sup> or Baruch,<sup>18</sup> were responsible for some part of DtrG. This speculation does explain the relationship between the two literatures, but it cannot be supported satisfactorily. A more

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<sup>17</sup>*Pace b. B. Bat.* 15a, Simon and Slotki (eds); Hävernicks, 168ff; Colenso, 6ff.

<sup>18</sup>Bleek, 408.

profitable approach is to focus on the date of the Deuteronomistic work in DtrG.

## 2. DtrG as the Result of a Single Stage of Redaction.

One view of DtrG has been that it is the result of redactional activity in the post-exilic period, involving either two redactions,<sup>19</sup> or simply one.<sup>20</sup> Another approach proposes that there were two Deuteronomistic redactions, one exilic, and one post-exilic.<sup>21</sup> One of the most influential suggestions is that of Noth, who argued that there was a single exilic Deuteronomistic redaction which composed the *Prosareden* in DtrG. He also identifies several aspects of the redaction which suggest that the entire work is the result of a single stage of redactional formation: the chronological framework, the presentation of an "ever-intensifying decline" in the nation's religious life, the importance of the temple and ark, and the affirmation of Deuteronomy's demand for one place of worship.<sup>22</sup>

## 3. Indications that the Whole of DtrG is not a Single Work.

There are clear signs that the books extending from Joshua-2 Kings have undergone more than a single stage of major Deuteronomistic redactional work. It is worth looking briefly at these indications before taking a specific position.

One can begin by questioning the view that the same group of redactors who worked on Samuel also worked on Kings. While the two redactional groups share common methods and views, particularly the use of *Kunstprosa*, they nonetheless show differences. First, the redactors of Kings frequently cite source material. But in Samuel, there is only one source citation, i.e. the reference to the book of Jasher in 2 Sam. 1:18. Secondly, it has frequently been noted that the standard by which the kings are judged is their policy on the *bamoth*, i.e. whether they upheld the Deuteronomic demand that sacrifice be carried out only in a single location. While it is true that this standard by which the nation's

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<sup>19</sup>Spinoza, *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, Elwes (ed), 127ff.

<sup>20</sup>Hölscher, 1922, 247, 250; 1923, 199-211.

<sup>21</sup>Levin, 1984, 351-354, 363, 371.

<sup>22</sup>Noth, 1981.

kings are judged would not have come into effect until the temple was built in Jerusalem, it should be noted that the redactors wrote an introductory note to the account of Solomon's encounter with God at the *bamah* in Gibeon (1 Ki. 3:2), excusing the king's participation in sacrifice at this location by pointing out that the temple had not yet been built. This suggests that the redactors of Kings felt the need to excuse such *bamah* worship even before the account of the temple's construction is narrated. But it has been pointed out that there are no such apologetic notes in Samuel,<sup>23</sup> despite the fact that Samuel sacrifices at a *bamah* (1 Sam. 9:12ff), and builds an altar in Ramah. If the redactors of Samuel are those of kings, one could expect apologetic glosses explaining why this was acceptable, as in 1 Ki. 3:2. Finally, it is noteworthy that in Samuel's great speech in 1 Sam. 12, the consequence for rebelling against God and disobeying the commandments is not exile, but simply the threat that Yahweh's hand would be against the people (1 Sam. 12:15). This contrasts notably with Solomon's great speech in 1 Ki. 8. These considerations suggest that the compilation of Samuel was the work of different redactors than those involved with Kings.

At the same time, there are indications within Kings that more than one redactional phase is present, which can be linked to some of the elements forwarded by Noth as indicative of a single redactional phase. First there is the question of chronology. While it is clear that there is a concern for chronology throughout the work, that which is presented in Kings is too problematic to believe that it was superimposed in a single stage. If this were the case, then one could expect a more sensible chronology. Second, the idea of a continual decline is to be found in Kings, particularly from Ahaz to Manasseh, the effect of which is somewhat offset by the intervening reforms of Hezekiah and Josiah. But it is noteworthy that this intensification stops with Manasseh. The sins of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, who brought the nation to its final destruction, are not enumerated, even though Jehoiakim's treatment of Uriah (Jer. 26:23) provided a parallel for the Deuteronomistic charge against Manasseh in 2 Ki. 21:16. 2 Chr. 36:14 and the book of Ezekiel testify to the fact that the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah saw further religious apostasy. But the sins of these two kings are not listed.

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<sup>23</sup>Bleek, 396.

The treatment of the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah have the character of being a cursory update to the history of the kings, and given the fact that they followed the reign of Josiah, the spiritual zenith in the post-Davidic era, a single redaction aiming at an ever intensifying progression of the nation's sin would naturally have focused on the Jehoiakim-Zedekiah period as the culmination point. Finally, there is the issue of the temple and ark. It is clear that both are highly significant for the redactors responsible for 1 Ki. 8. But in the case of 2 Ki. 25, the temple's destruction is described very briefly, and in a way which clearly contrasts with the manner in which the building and consecration of the temple are handled. Moreover, when the inventory of the items plundered from the temple is given (2 Ki. 25: 13-17), the ark is not even mentioned. This suggests a dichotomy between the way temple and ark are viewed in different parts of Kings. In fact, the final phase of Judah's history is told almost as a footnote to what precedes it. These considerations suggest more than one stage of redactional activity.

#### 4. Indications of a Pre-exilic Date.

Finally, it can be noted that several indications are present in 2 Kings which indicate both more than one redaction, and a pre-exilic stage for at least two of these redactions. First, attention should be focused on the redactional phrase "up to this day," used to inform the reader that conditions just described continued up to the time of composition. The use of this expression is clearly editorial, and the frequency of its occurrence suggests a redacted form of Kings, and not various sources or fragments.<sup>24</sup> Many of the editorial updates clearly indicate a pre-exilic date: 1 Ki. 8:8; 9:21; 2 Ki. 8:22; 17:34, 41, and many others are consistent with this. This redactional technique, particularly as it occurs in clearly Deuteronomistic contexts (e.g. 1 Ki. 8; 2 Ki. 17), suggests a pre-exilic edition of Kings.

A second indication of a pre-exilic date is the Deuteronomistic explanation for the collapse of the Northern Kingdom (2 Ki. 17:7ff). The subject is predominantly that of Samaria, with references to Judah being few. It is remarkable that an exiled writer from Judah

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<sup>24</sup>Wellhausen, 1889, 299; and S. R. Driver, 1913, 198; *pace* Graf, 1866, 109f; Noth, 12, 79.



would have composed a long explanation for Samaria's defeat over 160 years previously, but no such explanation was written for Jerusalem's defeat, which clearly presented the real theological problem for the exilic community. It is more likely that the Deuteronomistic redactors who composed this piece lived before 587, and were not confronted with the problem of Judah's exile. It has also been noted that the references to Judah in 17: 19-20 are an addition to the original composition meant as an update including Judah after 587.<sup>25</sup>

Another important example is the redactional composition in 2 Ki. 24: 1-4, which seeks to explain why various bands of enemy forces plagued Judah in the later period of Jehoiakim's reign. Although he notes in 24:1 that Jehoiakim rebelled against Nebuchadrezzar, the writer prefers to attribute the crisis to the sins of Manasseh. He clearly applies the prophecy found in 2 Ki. 21:10ff, which sentences Judah to exile (vs. 14) for the sins of Manasseh's reign. This is instructive, since if an exilic writer were responsible for 24: 1-4, he would not have applied 2 Ki. 21:10ff to the events at the end of Jehoiakim's reign, but rather to the destruction and exile of Judah in 587. The events in 24:2 were a precursor to Nebuchadrezzar's invasion which left Jerusalem intact. The application of 2 Ki. 21:10ff to the events of 24: 1-4 indicates that the author wrote this before 587, and indeed before the appearance of Nebuchadrezzar, the exile of Jehoiachin, and the developments which accompanied it (24:10ff).

A final observation, which is also important in determining the number and dates of the pre-exilic redactions of Kings, concerns the redactors' judgements of Hezekiah and Josiah. 2 Ki. 18:5 claims that there was no king like the pious Hezekiah among the kings of Judah who preceded or followed him. 23:25 records a similar judgement for Josiah. It has been noted rightly that the judgement of Hezekiah in 2 Ki. 18:5 must have been written by a redactor whose work did not include an account of Josiah's reign.<sup>26</sup> This requires that the reigns of Hezekiah and Josiah were parts of two different redactions.

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<sup>25</sup>Wellhausen, 1889, 298f; Nowack, 229.

<sup>26</sup>Provan, 153.

These considerations lead to the conclusion that those scholars are correct who posit more than one stage of redactional work in the production of at least Kings, if not all of DtrG, and that at least one of these stages is pre-exilic.<sup>27</sup> The most plausible understanding of the redactional history of Kings lies between the proposals of Weippert and Provan.<sup>28</sup> While it has been generally assumed that there was one pre-exilic redactor, Weippert suggests that there were two pre-exilic redactors. This view would appear to be correct for two reasons. First, the assessments of Hezekiah (2 Ki. 18:5) and Josiah (23:25) indicate that the redactors responsible for those parts of Kings containing these two accounts are by two different redactors. That the second redactor is pre-exilic is indicated by the commentary in 24: 1-4 (see above). Thus Provan is right to regard that version dealing with Hezekiah as ending with his reign, and dating it to the pre-reform, Josianic era. Moreover, Weippert is right that there was a second pre-exilic redactor. But he should be attributed with writing the history extending from Manasseh to Jehoiakim (up to 24: 1-5). It was the third redactor, working in the exilic period, who briefly updated the work of the first two redactors, adding much of 24:6ff. Working in the exilic time explains why he could not cite the chronicles of the kings of Judah for the reigns of Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. Although the first redactor of Kings worked before the publication of Deuteronomy in 622, his use of Deuteronomistic language and ideas is to be linked to dependence on the style and ideology of those circles in which the original Deuteronomic tradition was being developed. In section III. 3, it was noted that the books of Samuel, another component of DtrG, seem to reflect a different redactional stage than those in Kings, suggesting that those responsible for the historical presentation in Samuel worked before the first Deuteronomistic redaction of Kings, although probably not long before the latter, and it is plausible that this earlier presentation of David encouraged the extension of the history up to the reign of Hezekiah, who, in the opinion of the first redactor of Kings, was the first to meet the criterion for being a true Yahwistic king, i.e. to be like David. As Provan has shown, the David-theme is the

<sup>27</sup>Kittel, 1900, VI-VIII; Sellin, 1923, 122ff; J. Gray, 1977, 6-9; Lohfink, 1978, 339ff; 1987, 462ff.

<sup>28</sup>Weippert, 1972, 301ff; Provan, 89, 116f, 131ff, 171ff.

important second element by which the first redactor of Kings judges Judahite monarchs.<sup>29</sup> Consequently, the redactors of the traditions in Samuel should be seen as operating within the same religious environment as the redactors of Kings. Thus the tradition had left its impact on the general religious milieu of certain circles in Judah from which the first Deuteronomistic historians derived, despite the loss of Deuteronomy itself at some time before 622. As noted in chapter one, Josiah's centralisation of the cult, which took place before Deuteronomy's discovery, is probably the result of the decision to emulate Hezekiah. Since the first Deuteronomistic redactor of Kings ended his edition with Hezekiah, Provan may well be right that a connection should be drawn between this historian and the reform-oriented group at Josiah's court,<sup>30</sup> who would eventually convert the king to their principles, and consequently see their nationalistic-religious program put into effect. Thus as the reform group at the court guided the religious development of the young king, they held out his great-grandfather Hezekiah as the model for a Yahwistic monarch.

#### IV. The Significance of Deuteronomy.

In addition to DtrG, the Deuteronomic tradition itself is the other significant aspect relevant to the formation of the religious and literary milieu of Jeremiah's career. In the concluding paragraph of Section III a few comments were made about the relationship between the Deuteronomic tradition and the Deuteronomistic historical work. But a further discussion is warranted.

As was the case with DtrG, the origination of the book of Deuteronomy is a very complicated issue, and generations of scholars have contributed to the various, conflicting positions forwarded to explain the genesis of Deuteronomy. Clearly a comprehensive treatment of this issue is beyond the scope of this study. What is significant here is whether the Deuteronomic tradition exerted influence in the religious and cultural milieu of Jeremiah's time. The question of Deuteronomy was raised briefly in chapter one in relation to the identity of the book discovered in 622.

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<sup>29</sup>Provan, 116f, 171f.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid, 154f.

In that discussion it was concluded that the book was Deuteronomy, and that the basic approach which denies this, i.e. that Deuteronomy did not originate in the pre-exilic period, is incorrect. It was suggested that one of the main foundations of this view is the perception that many Deuteronomic ideas are unrealistic or utopian, and therefore do not reflect a time of origination when the terms of the code had any possibility of being enacted. While it was granted that many of Deuteronomy's expectations are idealistic, it was noted that history is replete with reform and revolutionary movements whose programs contain idealistic or utopian elements, which in the end cannot be achieved, and must therefore be dropped or modified. That is not to say that Deuteronomy does not contain late elements, but the denial of some pre-exilic form of the book is tenuous.

However, it has been suggested that the book of Deuteronomy which appeared in 622 was an *ad hoc* work written specifically for the reforms.<sup>31</sup> While it is likely that, after the code's discovery and before its publication, it was re-worked by scribal authorities to prepare it for presentation to the public, the view that it was written shortly before its appearance is questionable. This is clear from the account of 2 Ki. 22:3ff. This narrative was discussed in chapter one, where it was noted that many scholars doubt the historicity of it. It was argued that there is no reason to question the basic reliability of the account. Studies which do so tend to isolate various aspects of 22:3ff, and then suggest that the person or persons involved should have behaved in a different way. For the most part, these are purely subjective conclusions. It was also noted that there are logical explanations for the way the narrative develops, and it must be remembered that 22:3ff is a stylised account which gives a general depiction of what happened, without providing all the details which would illuminate the intricacies of the actual happenings. It has been proposed that the apparent indifference toward the book shown by Shaphan indicates that he was concealing a personal interest, i.e. he was one of those involved in the attempt to deceive Josiah.<sup>32</sup> However, this is not the correct explanation. It must be remembered that Josiah was an ancient

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<sup>31</sup>DeWette, 199; Budde, 1926, 204, 222; Albertz, 1994, 198ff.

<sup>32</sup>H. Schmidt, 182.



Near eastern monarch, and Shaphan was his servant. The latter had been given specific orders about the temple construction work, and it would have been foolish to have reported back to any ancient Near eastern monarch and not to have made it immediately clear that the king's order had been carried out. Despite his standing at the court, Shaphan was still a servant, and would still have to conform stringently to court etiquette if he wished to keep his position. It should also be noted that he would not have been sure as to how Josiah would respond to a book which appeared to imply that all his reform measures were for naught. Thus Shaphan wisely presents the book in as neutral a manner as possible, so as not to take a position which might be in conflict with the one his royal master would take. This is the action of an official who wishes to survive at the court. In short, there are no reasons to suspect that ulterior motives were at work, or that the account is not basically reliable.<sup>33</sup>

The account itself indicates clearly that there was no question about the book's authenticity. Josiah's great perturbation at hearing the contents suggests that he had no doubts about its authenticity, and Huldah's response to the delegation confirms that the king's concern was about the calamity it threatened, not whether it was genuine. Moreover, when Hilkiah reports his discovery to Shaphan, he uses the definite article, i.e. he has found *the* book of the law, not *a* book of the law. This suggests that he recognised it, indicating that it had really been lost and subsequently found.<sup>34</sup> Thus it is not the case that Deuteronomy is presented as new in 622.<sup>35</sup>

If Deuteronomy in some form had indeed been re-discovered in 622, i.e. it was not produced at that time and part of some elaborate scheme, then the question of its true age presents itself. This is a particularly complex issue, but it can be said that for many scholars, Deuteronomy is acknowledged to have originated well before Josiah's reign. Nothing in 2 Ki. 22f can even begin to provide a date, so a study of Deuteronomy itself would be required. While this is not possible here, it can be noted that scholars have often drawn a connection with the era comprising the reigns of Hezekiah

<sup>33</sup>König, 1893, 223; S. R. Driver, 1902, livf.

<sup>34</sup>Oettli, 18; Kittel, 1925, 407f.

<sup>35</sup>Pace Graf, 1866, 1ff; Haran, 136ff.



and Manasseh. The reasons for this are clear, many of the demands made in Deuteronomy are consistent with the religious policies of Hezekiah, first and foremost centralisation of the Yahweh cult. Thus one approach is to place the origination of Deuteronomy in the reign of Manasseh within a circle which, disaffected by the reversal of Hezekiah's reforms, sought to embody its ideas and principles in what eventually became Deuteronomy.<sup>36</sup> This explanation attributes the origination of Deuteronomy to Judahites.

A second approach would see in Deuteronomy a nucleus which reflects ancient Northern Israelite traditions.<sup>37</sup> According to Alt, these were codified in Deuteronomy between 722 and 622 as a plan for reconstituting Northern Israelite practices at a future time when Assyrian domination had passed, and at some point, these traditions were taken to Jerusalem.<sup>38</sup> Others have noted that the date 722 for this transference is plausible, positing that refugees fleeing the collapse of Samaria could have brought the Deuteronomic traditions to Jerusalem. Upon their arrival, these traditions were then taken up by reform-oriented circles in Jerusalem well-disposed to their principles, and further developed.<sup>39</sup> Arguments can be made for and against these theories, and both have proven influential in the course of scholarship. The historical milieu of the era extending from Ahaz to Manasseh also provides a very significant link with a facet of Old Testament scholarship which stands to offer important modifications to the more traditional, literary-critical study of Deuteronomy, i.e. the great similarities between the latter and the vassal treaties of the Assyrians and Hittites.<sup>40</sup> What is most important here is that the development of the Deuteronomic traditions in Judah after 722 indicates a milieu in which its ideas, style, vocabulary, etc., would have had great influence. Some scholars have made a connection between the circles in which the Deuteronomic tradition was fostered, and the priestly groups in Anathoth from where Jeremiah derived.<sup>41</sup> There is an interesting point in favour of this suggestion. When Manasseh came to the

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<sup>36</sup>Ewald, 1864, 171f, 186f; Kittel, 1925, 397f; Rowley, 1950, 157-164.

<sup>37</sup>Welch, 1924, 190, 206.

<sup>38</sup>Alt, 273f.

<sup>39</sup>Rost, 114; Weinfeld, 1972, 210 (notes 41-42); Bright, 1981, 321.

<sup>40</sup>McCarthy, 1963; Hillers, 1964; Frankena, 1965, 122-154; Weinfeld, 1972, 59ff.

<sup>41</sup>Kaufmann, 415-420; Thompson, 44; Lundbom, 1993, 84.

throne, he was intent on reversing the policies of Hezekiah. The extent to which this was pursued is indicated by 2 Ki. 21:16, where Manasseh is said to have indulged in the political murder of those in opposition to him. The latter would have constituted the reform circles in which the Deuteronomic traditions were fostered, and the close proximity of Anathoth to the capital, along with its prominent priestly element, would have provided a source of refuge for those fleeing the persecution of Manasseh. Later under Josiah, these groups would seek to re-obtain prominence in Jerusalem, and the possibility that some of their adherents were involved in the assassination of Amon cannot be excluded. Thus Jeremiah may well have grown up in an environment in which oral tradition linked to the Deuteronomic reform circles was influential, explaining his readiness to use the ideas, style, and vocabulary discernible in the emerging Deuteronomic and Deuteronomistic traditions.

#### V. The *Kunstprosa* as a style of the Seventh-Sixth Centuries.

The observations made in relation to DtrG and Deuteronomy in the preceding two sections lead to a conclusion which adequately explains two of the issues mentioned in section II. 2, i.e. the appearance of more than one *Gattung* in the book of Jeremiah, and the fact that the *Prosareden* style appears in both Jeremiah and DtrG. The development of the Deuteronomic traditions within certain circles in seventh century Judah, which may well have had connections with the priestly groups in Anathoth, and the contemporaneous work being done by the Deuteronomistic historical redactors, suggests a religious and cultural milieu in Judah which developed and utilised the *Kunstprosa* style. Since this is also the time at which Jeremiah grew up, and became active as a prophet, his use of the style can be explained as the utilisation of an emerging *Gattung* of seventh century Judah, particularly among the Yahwistic, reform-oriented circles. This basic idea has impressed itself on many commentators attempting to explain the use of the *Gattung* in the book of Jeremiah. Robinson regarded Mowinckel's sources A, B, and C as styles, viewing the *Prosareden* as representing the "artistic poetry" or "literary prose" of the time, also noting its use

by Ezekiel, a later contemporary of Jeremiah.<sup>42</sup> The view that the relevant style should be understood as common to seventh-sixth century Judah has been echoed by others.<sup>43</sup>

It should be noted that the realisation that the *Kunstprosa* was a *Gattung* of Jeremiah's age is also reflected in the view taken by many scholars that its use in the Jeremiah tradition is to be attributed to disciples closely associated with the prophet. Thus some attribute it to Baruch, suggesting that it was his redacting and reworking of some of Jeremiah's material which introduced the features of the *Kunstprosa* into the prophet's own style.<sup>44</sup> A similar approach is taken by scholars who, instead of Baruch, speak more generally of a group of Jeremiah's disciples, among whom a prose sermon tradition was fostered which preserved statements and views of the prophet, but as these were understood and expanded by the group.<sup>45</sup> This approach has the advantage of acknowledging the 'Jeremianic' nature of the *Kunstprosa*, and reducing the chronological distance between this prose and the prophet himself. But there is an important element here to consider, namely the reason why it is more plausible to connect the *Kunstprosa* with Jeremiah's disciples, and not the prophet himself. In other words, if it is acknowledged that the *Gattung* was prominent in Jeremiah's own time, and that it preserves ideas and teachings from the prophet, one can justifiably wonder why it should not be attributed to Jeremiah himself. Two answers present themselves to this question. The first is plainly stated by Pfeiffer, and it goes back to the same subjective, personal opinion about the perceived quality of the *Gattung* which was noted earlier as the legacy of Duhm, i.e. the style is too inferior and displeasing to attribute it to the prophet.<sup>46</sup> As was stated earlier, this is simply too arbitrary and subjective to be followed here. One's personal appraisal of the quality of such a style is not grounds for the rejection of its authenticity. It can also be said that this approach may also be rooted in another opinion held by Duhm, i.e. that Jeremiah was not

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<sup>42</sup>Robinson, 1924, 209ff; (cf. 1920, 24ff); Oesterley and Robinson, 1934, 304ff.

<sup>43</sup>Eissfeldt, 1964, 19f; Rowley, 1950, 170; Bright, 1951, 27; 1965, LXXXI; Thompson, 342; D. R. Jones, 1992, 20.

<sup>44</sup>Giesebrecht, 1894, XVIII; 1907, XXIVf; Pfeiffer, 504f.

<sup>45</sup>Bright, 1951, 27; 1965, LXXff, 58f; 1966a, 17f, 23; Thompson, 43ff, 273; Sturdy, 143ff.

<sup>46</sup>Pfeiffer, 504.

primarily a prophet, but rather an idyllic poet. However this view is tenuous, since the prime concern of Jeremiah was to present the message of Yahweh, as he perceived it, to his people. Rather than seeing him as a poet who also functioned as a prophet, it is more appropriate to see him as a prophet who used prophetic poetry, but only as one tool among others. Another reason which has been forwarded to support a denial of the *Kunstprosa* to Jeremiah is that which had appeared earlier in Hyatt's work, i.e. that the *Prosareden* contain theological positions incompatible with those of Jeremiah.<sup>47</sup> It was said earlier that this depends largely upon exegesis of all the relevant material, and while in the chapters which follow several significant prose sermons will be examined, not all of them can be. However, looking through the extent of the *Kunstprosa*, the main text which can be said to produce a potential conflict with Jeremiah's own views is 17: 19-27, i.e. the speech which appears to make the stringent observation of the Sabbath into the condition for the continued existence of a thriving Jerusalem. But even granting the incompatibility of the principles found in the piece, the most that this would indicate is the presence of a later addition in the book of Jeremiah. A verdict of inauthenticity for this piece does not lead to the denial of the *Kunstprosa* to Jeremiah himself. In the main, the *Prosareden* in Jeremiah do not express theological perspectives incompatible with the prophet's own.

The clear alternative which remains is to associate the *Kunstprosa* with Jeremiah himself. This view was adopted originally by Robinson and Eissfeldt, both of whom regarded various *Prosareden* as part of the 605 *Urrolle*.<sup>48</sup> But a far more thorough study of this issue is that of Weippert, who analysed the prose sermons, and, building on Bright's study which showed the differences that exist between the *Prosareden* in Jeremiah and that in the Deuteronomistic-Deuteronomistic literature,<sup>49</sup> argued that the implications of the similarities in vocabulary are significantly restricted by the fact that both sets of literature use the vocabulary differently. The *Kunstprosa* in Jeremiah shows two notable stylistic features which it has in common with the poetic material, i.e. *parallelismus membrorum* and the formation of word groups. Thus this type of

<sup>47</sup>Bright, 1951, 27; 1965, 120.

<sup>48</sup>Robinson, 1924, 218ff; Eissfeldt, 1964, 19f, 472ff, 476.

<sup>49</sup>I.e. Bright, 1951, 17ff.



prose is related to the poetry, and is also distinct from purely narrative prose. The development of this type of "rednerische Prosa" resulted both from the shift away from short prophetic oracles to larger contexts in which loss of metre consequently occurred, and the dissolution of traditional styles, which can be linked to the appearance of the new *Gattung*. Thus the *Kunstprosa* can be traced back to Jeremiah, and although this does not lead to the conclusion that all of it is authentic, it establishes the important principle that the simple use of it does not automatically exclude authenticity.<sup>50</sup> In other words, the authenticity of a prose sermon must be determined by an examination of it. As noted above, this is particularly relevant in relation to 17:19ff.

Weippert's conclusions, which emphasise the close relationship between the *Kunstprosa* and Jeremiah's poetry, provide a more cogent explanation for the differences between the *Prosareden* in Jeremiah and that in the Deuteronomic-Deuteronomistic literature than that noted in the discussion in section I, namely that the *Kunstprosa* in Jeremiah is a particular sub-class of Deuteronomistic work. Weippert's approach keeps the Jeremianic nature of the poetry and prose sermons in the book of Jeremiah in the forefront of the solution. It is also worth noting that, as discussed earlier, Herrmann acknowledges that the change in prophetic style described above was underway in the seventh-sixth centuries, and that Jeremiah's preaching would reflect it to some extent. But it is Weippert's approach which draws the most logical conclusion from this realisation.

The conclusions reached by Weippert have also largely been adopted by Holladay, who maintains that Weippert has produced the "definitive work" on this subject. However, Holladay links Weippert's approach to his own decision to lower the date at which Jeremiah became active as a prophet. This will be discussed further in chapter three. But here it can be noted that Holladay identifies a problem not solved by Weippert's work, i.e. the reason why the *Kunstprosa* appeared first among the prophets in the activity of Jeremiah. Holladay solves this quandary by placing the beginning of Jeremiah's career later than Josiah's publication of

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<sup>50</sup>Weippert, 1973, 23-25, 74-81, 231ff.



Deuteronomy.<sup>51</sup> However, a different position will be adopted here than that taken by Holladay, and which dissents from the view that Weippert sets out on this matter, namely that Jeremiah originally used poetry, and that *Kunstprosa* only became apparent in Jeremiah's post-Josianic period.<sup>52</sup> While it must be granted that most, if not all, the *Prosareden* in Jeremiah appear to be from the period of 622 and later, an objection can be made to the attempt to determine a specific case of dependence as the cause for Jeremiah taking up the elements of the *Prosareden* style. It was noted earlier that the development of the Deuteronomic tradition within certain circles had been going on since the reigns of Hezekiah and Manasseh, and that the latter's policy of brutal suppression of those who opposed him, i.e. the Yahwistic reform groups of his father's reign who fostered the developing Deuteronomic traditions, would lend credence to a shift on the part of these groups from Jerusalem to nearby Anathoth, where priestly elements were prominent. Such a connection would suggest a religious and cultural milieu in which a developing, oral Deuteronomic tradition would exert an influence, and thus the fact that Jeremiah was raised and educated in a priestly family in Anathoth would indicate that he would have become receptive to the developments taking place in the environment in which he lived. Therefore the reason for the change in prophetic style noticeable in Jeremiah is less one of strict dependence on the literary appearance of Deuteronomy, and more that of the general chronological and religious background from which the prophet came.

## VI. Conclusion.

The conclusion to be reached from the discussion in this chapter is that the frequent use of *Kunstprosa* in the book of Jeremiah is to be explained as due to the prophet utilising a particular *Gattung* which had appeared in seventh century Judah. This style was being used contemporaneously by other strict Yahwistic circles among whom the Deuteronomic traditions were fostered, and who were involved in the production of the different stages of DtrG. Therefore in the

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<sup>51</sup>Holladay, 1975, 402ff.

<sup>52</sup>Weippert, 1973, 81.

remainder of this study, various prose sermons in the book of Jeremiah, when there are no other reasons to doubt their being the words of the prophet, will be utilised in the discussion of Jeremiah's relationship to the reforms of Josiah.

# CHAPTER 3

## THE DATE OF JEREMIAH'S CALL

### I. Introduction.

Jeremiah is the first prophet who is assigned a precise date for his call, going beyond the traditional method of simply listing the kings during whose reigns the prophet was active, and providing a specific regnal year. Jer. 1:2 specifically dates the beginning of Jeremiah's activity to the thirteenth year of Josiah, and 25:3 describes Jeremiah's career as being in its twenty-third year in 605. The prophets following Jeremiah also made use of ordinal numbers to designate the beginning of the prophet's career: Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, and Zechariah. Jer. 1:2 represents a transition between the latter and earlier prophets such as Isaiah and Amos, whose traditions provide chronological indicators of when the two prophets began to prophesy, but not regnal years. Isaiah was called in the year Uzziah died (6:1), which would suggest the fifty-second year of Uzziah, but given the chronological difficulties of Judah's history prior to Hezekiah, it may well be that the information about the length of Uzziah's reign is incorrect.<sup>1</sup> Amos' appearance is dated to two years before an earthquake, which is remembered as late as Zechariah's time (14:5), and is connected with Uzziah's

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<sup>1</sup>His reign may have lasted ca. 37 years (773/772-737/736).

contraction of leprosy by Josephus.<sup>2</sup> This earthquake has been dated to 760.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, one lacks the specificity of the date in Jer. 1:2.

As will be discussed below, scholars have raised various objections to the date 627 provided in 1:2 and 25:3, leading them to posit lower dates for the beginning of Jeremiah's activity. Two traditions may indicate a belief that Jeremiah was active before 627. The Targumist renders Jeremiah's objection in 1:6 in such a way that the call to be a prophet to the nations in 1:5 represents a later stage of activity, and thus Jeremiah objects that he cannot prophesy to the nations because he had thus far prophesied disaster to his own people. Thus either Jeremiah was seen as active prior to 627, or that which is typically regarded as the call narrative (1:4ff) is viewed as dating to a time subsequent to 627. The former is consistent with the view that Jeremiah had been a prophetic understudy at the time of his call.<sup>4</sup> It should also be noted that Origen renders the reference to Josiah's thirteenth year in 1:2 with the preposition ἕως ("until"), which may also suggest that Jeremiah was believed to have been active prior to 627.<sup>5</sup> But clearly there is nothing in the Jeremiah tradition to support such an idea. Scholarly debate about Jeremiah's beginnings focuses on the year 627, or lowering this date.

In what follows, the objections to the 627 date which have been forwarded by scholars who either regard the date as a fiction, or see in it some other significance, will be discussed. Then the alternatives to this date which have been proposed will be shown to be implausible. Important texts which will be discussed include the call narrative (Jer. 1), and the account of the production of the *Urrolle* (Jer. 36). Finally, two of the objections noted in this chapter will be shown to be invalid. It is appropriate to begin by discussing the objections to the 627 date.

## II. Objections to the Date 627.

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<sup>2</sup>*Jewish Antiquities* IX: 225, Marcus (ed).

<sup>3</sup>Yadin, Aharoni, et. al., 24ff, 36f; see also Soggin, 1970, 95ff.

<sup>4</sup>See Kimchi on Jer. 1:2; Ginzburg, 386, 388.

<sup>5</sup>Homilies on Jeremiah I, Husson and Nautin (eds), 198.

Many scholars have forwarded several objections to the date 627 as that at which Jeremiah began his prophetic career. The most significant of these are as follows: the idea that Babylon was intended as the foe from the north from the outset of Jeremiah's activity,<sup>6</sup> the lack of any contact between Jeremiah and Josiah generally,<sup>7</sup> and in particular, the fact that Jeremiah was not involved in the reforms,<sup>8</sup> and that consequently Huldah was consulted in 622 when Deuteronomy was discovered,<sup>9</sup> the perception that Jeremiah does not mention, or take a position on, the Josianic reforms,<sup>10</sup> the proposal of a period of silence during the later part of Josiah's reign which is often suggested by commentators upholding the 627 date,<sup>11</sup> and the lack of material which can be dated to Josiah's reign with certainty.<sup>12</sup> It can also be noted that two less common objections have been forwarded: the presence of Deuteronomic influence in the call narrative presupposes the publication of Deuteronomy in 622,<sup>13</sup> and the issue of Jeremiah's age at his call in relation to his declaration of celibacy in 16:1ff.<sup>14</sup> These considerations have prompted many scholars who do not find an alternative significance for the date 627 for the beginning of Jeremiah's activity, to conclude that it is a tendentious invention of redactors.<sup>15</sup> Thus those passages which link Jeremiah with Josiah's reign (1:2; 3:6; 25:3; 36:2) are regarded as purely editorial and unreliable.

These objections have prompted many scholars to reject the year 627 as the point at which Jeremiah began to prophesy, and to posit later dates. This issue is the prime concern of the present study, and will be dealt with in two stages. First, this chapter will examine the alternatives to the 627 date as proposed by various exegetes,

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<sup>6</sup>Horst, 1923a, 95, 132; Gordon, 1931, 106; Hyatt, 1940, 507ff; May, 1945, 225f; Holladay, 1964, 161; 1989, 26; Blenkinsopp, 1984, 163; Grant, 1986, 159; Lundbom, 1992, 688; Schreiner, 1995, 15.

<sup>7</sup>Hyatt, 1942, 166; 1966, 213; Whitley, 1964, 467.

<sup>8</sup>Bardtke, 219; Biddle, 19.

<sup>9</sup>Sandmel, 127; Holladay, 1981, 70.

<sup>10</sup>Winckler, 112; Gordon, 1932/3, 564; Gottwald, 395.

<sup>11</sup>Bardtke, 219; Levin, 1981, 437; McKane, 1986, 5; Lundbom, 1993, 54.

<sup>12</sup>Horst, 1923a, 94; Gottwald, 395.

<sup>13</sup>Holladay, 1964, 160; 1966, 17ff; 1989, 26; Lundbom, 1976, 302; 1993, 62.

<sup>14</sup>Bardtke, 220 (& fn. 1); Holladay, 1981, 60ff; 1986, 4f, 468f.

<sup>15</sup>Winckler, 112; Horst, 1923a, 95ff; Hyatt, 1942, 165f, 168ff (vs. 1956); Whitley, 1964, 482f; Levin, 1981, 428ff; Carroll, 1986, 65, 90ff; 1991, 229f; Schreiner, 1995, 12, 15f, 27f.



and show them to be tenuous. Secondly, the issues relevant to the objections themselves will be examined, and shown to be invalid. The result will be to uphold the 627 date found in 1:2 and 25:3 as the commencement of Jeremiah's career. The two final objections listed above will be discussed in this chapter, while the more substantial objections will be handled in the remaining chapters of this study.

### III. The Year 627 as a Tendentious Editorial Creation.

#### 1. Introduction.

It should be noted that two main approaches are discernible in the work of commentators who posit a later date for the commencement of Jeremiah's prophetic career. Whereas some would uphold the historicity of the date in 1:2, but nonetheless regard it as pertaining to an event other than the beginning of the prophet's initial activity, others would simply dismiss it as the tendentious creation of redactors. In the remainder of section III, the latter approach will be addressed.

#### 2. 627 as an Editorial Fiction and the Issue of an Historical Impetus.

Scholars who regard the 627 date to be a tendentious invention of redactors offer considerably lower dates for the beginning of Jeremiah's career, although not all who take this approach proffer specific dates. Some imply a date at some point later in Josiah's reign,<sup>16</sup> or simply some time in Jehoiakim's reign.<sup>17</sup> Carroll, who regards the person of Jeremiah essentially as a creation of the traditionists, naturally does not speak in terms of a specific time at which a specific, identifiable prophet became active. He does, however, set some of the foe oracles in the period 609-587.<sup>18</sup> Biddle, adopting similar views to those of Carroll, also focuses on a small amount of foe material as the pre-exilic layer in Jeremiah, but limits it to the time of the Babylonian invasion and destruction of Judah,

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<sup>16</sup>Wilke, 250ff (cf. 233ff).

<sup>17</sup>McKane, 1986, 5.

<sup>18</sup>Carroll, 1986, 47f, 57f, 92, 116, 160, 174; 1991, 229.

i.e. 605-587.<sup>19</sup> Others are more specific, proposing dates such as some time between 614-610,<sup>20</sup> when the Medio-Babylonian coalition was involved in the final destruction of Nineveh, 609/608,<sup>21</sup> i.e. the death of Josiah and accession of Jehoiakim, and 605,<sup>22</sup> the date of the Babylonian victory at Charchemish. Thus for these scholars, the need for a historical stimulus for the prophet's appearance is apparent.

In evaluating the general approach described above, one must focus on two issues. The first issue is how these scholars explain the choice of Josiah's thirteenth year, and the second is the question of a historical catalyst. In other words, the claim that the date 627 is purely editorial must be linked to these two considerations if it is to be substantiated. The question of those responsible for the date in 1:2 will be addressed later in this section. Otherwise, the approach taken by these commentators must be assessed in light of the objections forwarded in justification for a lower date. The latter will be discussed in the remaining chapters of this study.

Among scholars who see in 1:2 and 25:3 the work of redactors, two considerations are significant in explaining why the thirteenth year of Josiah, a date which coincides with none of those associated with the reign of Josiah in Kings (eighteenth), or Chronicles (eighth, twelfth, eighteenth), was chosen. Many have suggested that the redactors wished to place the beginning of Jeremiah's activity prior to the discovery of Deuteronomy, and thus to represent him as preparing the way for the reforms.<sup>23</sup> However, this does not explain why the thirteenth year of Josiah was specifically chosen. The apparent inexplicability of the 627 date has led some scholars to uphold it for this reason.<sup>24</sup> However, some have accounted for the derivation of this date. Horst, who follows a source-critical approach whereby the material in various parts of Jeremiah is divided between two writers, designated A and B, proposes that writer B knew of writer A's calculation of Jeremiah's career as

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<sup>19</sup>Biddle, 17ff, 27, 73ff.

<sup>20</sup>Winckler, 112; Hyatt, 1940, 507ff; 1942, 158 (vs. 1956; 1966).

<sup>21</sup>Horst, 1923a, 109ff, 131f; 1923b, 224; May, 1945, 224ff; Levin, 1981, 428ff; 1984, 367f (and ftn. 55); Blenkinsopp, 162.

<sup>22</sup>Whitley, 1964, 467ff; 1968, 38ff; Sandmel, 126f.

<sup>23</sup>Winckler, 112; Horst, 1923a, 131; 1923b, 224ff; Hyatt, 1940, 511f; 1942, 165f (vs. 1956); Whitley, 1964, 482f; Levin, 1981, 428ff; Blenkinsopp, 162; McKane, 1986, 4; Schreiner, 1995, 12, 15f, 27f.

<sup>24</sup>Duhm, 1901, 3; Thiel, 1973, 52, 61.

having lasted twenty-three years (608-587), as found in 1:3, and thus B obtained the date in 1:2 by adding these twenty-three years to the date 605, as found in 25:1.<sup>25</sup> However, this proposal is questionable. It is likely that if writer B knew of a tradition of twenty-three years of activity on Jeremiah's part, then he would also have known the dating scheme upon which this is based, i.e. the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign up to the destruction of Jerusalem (609-587). Thus one could expect this writer, if he were seeking a number to which he could add "twenty-three" in order to obtain a fictitious date, to have chosen the year 609. A more plausible approach is taken by commentators who have noted that the span of time created by the date 627 in 1:2f is approximately forty years. Given the obvious importance of such forty year periods in the Old Testament, it has been concluded that the redactors intentionally sought to create one for Jeremiah.<sup>26</sup> The tradition of forty year time spans is well-attested as a schematised calculation of the careers of leading Old Testament figures: Othniel, Deborah, Gideon, Eli, David, and Solomon, and its appearance in relation to the length of Saul's reign in Acts 13:21 further illustrates its importance. But even more significant is the use of the number forty in relation to Moses. His rule encompassed the forty years of the wilderness period (Num. 14:33; Deut. 1:3), and he was at Sinai for forty days and nights (Deut. 9:11, 18, 25; 10:10). Since Jeremiah was clearly influenced by the Moses traditions at the time of his call (cf. 1:9 with Deut. 18:18), the forty year career of Jeremiah in Judah is remarkable.

However, two observations should be made at this point. First, if redactors had sought to establish a forty year period for Jeremiah's activity in Judah, one could expect them to emphasise this with the phrase אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה, since without this expression, readers would be likely to miss the forty year time span. The failure to stress the forty years is not consistent with a tendentious fiction. But a more important observation is that the year 627 is that in which Assurbanipal died. Assyrian royal records do not indicate the length of Assurbanipal's reign, and it is clear that from his closing years up to the fall of Nineveh in 612, the political situation

<sup>25</sup>Horst, 1923a, 109ff, 115, 117.

<sup>26</sup>Levin, 1981, 428ff; Blenkinsopp, 162; Carroll, 1986, 90ff.

in Assyria and Babylon became chaotic. Two approaches have been taken to determine the year of Assurbanipal's death. The first involves linking the various dates found in Babylonian contracts with the series of kings including Assurbanipal, Assur-etili-ilani, and Sin-shar-ishkun, whereby each is calculated successively. This produces a date such as 633.<sup>27</sup> However, this would produce a reign of thirty-six years. The inscription of the mother of the last Neo-Babylonian king Nabunaid specifically records the length of the reigns of the kings of Assyria and Babylon from the year of her birth (twentieth year of Assurbanipal) up to the accession of her son (556). The length of Assurbanipal's reign is given as forty-two years.<sup>28</sup> This indicates that he died in the year 627. Saggs notes that the chaotic situation in Assyria and Babylon supports the idea that the reigns of the three kings mentioned above were not successive, but rather overlapped. Assur-etili-ilani was elevated to the throne in 630, while his father still lived. Upon the latter's death in 627, the problems in Babylon erupted into full-scale civil war, with claims on the throne made by Assur-etili-ilani, Sin-shum-lishir, Sin-shar-ishkun (the Assyrian king's twin brother), and finally Nabopolassar. Thus the reigns of Assur-etili-ilani and his brother overlapped as well, with the latter gaining control of Assyria as early as 626.<sup>29</sup> While the text BM 25127 indicates that war had broken out in Babylonia some time prior to Marcheswan 626,<sup>30</sup> Redford notes that warfare may have erupted in Assurbanipal's final days, i.e. in 627.<sup>31</sup> Thus the date 627 for Assurbanipal's death recommends itself.<sup>32</sup>

The fact that Jeremiah's call occurred at the time of Assurbanipal's death suggests a link with the historical developments in the Near East, rather than a tendentious fiction. Assurbanipal had held the Assyrian empire together, but earlier developments clearly showed that Assyria was weakening. Control of Egypt had been lost, a vicious civil war between Assurbanipal and his brother Shamash-shum-ukin had been fought (652-648), and the actions of Josiah in 628 showed that Assyrian control in

<sup>27</sup>Dubberstein, 38ff; Cross and Freedman, 56; Wiseman, 39, 90ff.

<sup>28</sup>Oppenheim, 1969, 560f.

<sup>29</sup>Saggs, 1962, 134ff; 1984, 117ff.

<sup>30</sup>Wiseman, 51, lines 1-15.

<sup>31</sup>Redford, 445.

<sup>32</sup>Saggs, 1962, 134ff; 1984, 117f; Redford, 445; Lundbom, 1992, 686; 1993, 11, 83.

Palestine was gone. An astute observer would have seen in Assurbanipal's death the advent of a momentous change in the political situation of the Near East, which would naturally have a great impact on Judah. Many might conclude that the disintegration of Assyria presaged a bright future for Judah. The backdrop of Josiah's developing reforms would have contributed to this impression, and the result would naturally have been the conclusion that Yahweh's anger with the nation was abating. However, Jeremiah perceived that much was still fundamentally wrong with Yahweh's people and, despite the disintegration of Assyria, God would still bring calamity from the north if Judah's problems were not rectified.

The above considerations provide external historical support for the 627 date, and in so doing, they meet a presupposition evident in the proposals of scholars who have attempted to fix an alternative beginning for Jeremiah's career, i.e. that of a direct historical impetus. The proposed dates 614-610, 609, and 605 all are based on fundamentally important events in Judah's history. The same is true for the suggestions of those exegetes who do not regard 1:2 as tendentious, but nonetheless propose lower dates for the actual beginning of Jeremiah's career: 616, the intensification of the war against Nineveh, 622, the discovery of the temple scroll, and 615, the second septennial reading of Deuteronomy (see section IV). Many scholars who follow the approach described above have made adjustments to the beginning of Jeremiah's activity in order to make a connection with such a historically significant event.<sup>33</sup> However, the significance of the 627 date, as discussed above, obviates the need for any other date.

### 3. The Composition of the Superscription 1: 1-3.

An important consideration in relation to the claim that all the passages linking Jeremiah to Josiah's reign are redactional and unreliable is one's understanding of 1: 1-3. As far as being editorial is concerned, the two passages 1:2 and 3:6 represent introductory clauses, and are therefore readily susceptible to being labelled 'redactional.' The situation is somewhat different with 25:3, which

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<sup>33</sup>Winckler, 112; Gordon, 1932/3, 564f; Bardtke, 218; Levin, 1981, 436.



refers to a period of twenty-three years during which Jeremiah received and announced the divine word, and 36:2, which refers to prophetic activity during Josiah's reign generally. These passages are not introductions, both being included in statements by Jeremiah (25:3), or to him (36:2). The situation with 25:3 and 3:6 is complicated by the fact that their larger contexts are often attributed to Deuteronomistic redactors. Both of these units will be discussed in subsequent chapters, where they will be treated in light of the conclusions reached in chapter two.<sup>34</sup> The reference to Josiah's reign in 36:2 naturally has to be regarded as secondary by those who reject any activity on Jeremiah's part under Josiah,<sup>35</sup> although Thiel's analysis of 36:2 upholds the reference to Josiah's reign.<sup>36</sup> But it is clearly the case that the date in 1:2 is the most important of all four passages in relation to the nature of these dates, and offers the best opportunity to determine the source of such dates.

This moves the superscription of 1: 1-3 to the forefront, since the position taken on these three verses affects one's conclusion about the date in 1:2. However, 1: 1-3 raises the important issue of the relationship of the various parts of the superscription to one another, and the compositional stages involved in the production of its current form. While some commentators have regarded 1: 1-3 to be a coherent, uniform text,<sup>37</sup> the current juxtaposition of vv. 2 and 3 creates the appearance that Jeremiah had only received divine revelation under Josiah in the latter's thirteenth year, and then again during the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. If the superscription were a uniform text, this would have to have been intentional.<sup>38</sup> However, it will be maintained below that both vv. 3 and 4 are later additions, and thus this appearance is unintentional. Therefore 1: 1-3 will be treated as a composite text. At the same time, a discussion of the superscription involves the events narrated in chapter 36, and the call narrative in 1:5ff. It is thus necessary to

<sup>34</sup>For 3:6ff see chapter seven, section VII; and for 25:1ff, see chapter four, section VI, number 5.

<sup>35</sup>Horst, 1923a, 96; Levin, 1981, 431.

<sup>36</sup>Thiel, 1973, 60.

<sup>37</sup>Duhm (apart from 3b), 1901, 2ff; Volz, 1920, 1; 1928, 1f; Rudolph, 1968, 3.

<sup>38</sup>So Duhm, 1901, 3f; Volz (who sees it as indicating a long pause between a later point in Josiah's reign, and the Jehoiakim-Zedekiah era), 1920, 1; 1928, 1f; Rudolph, 1968, 3. For this understanding of vs. 2, see also Winckler, 112; Rietzschel, 135.

look briefly at 1: 1-3 in order to determine what can be concluded about the source of the date in 1:2.

The first relevant issue is 1:1a. While MT reads דְּבַרֵּי יִרְמְיָהוּ, the LXX has το ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ ὃ ἐγένετο ἐπὶ Ἰερεμίαν... ("the word of God which came to Jeremiah..."). It has been suggested that the latter reflects a *Vorlage* of אֲשֶׁר הָיָה אֶל-יִרְמְיָהוּ.<sup>39</sup> Otherwise, V and T read as MT. Thus the question is immediately raised as to whether MT or LXX contains the more original reading. In relation to 1:1, Budde argued that the LXX is more original, because the expression דְּבַרֵּי יִרְמְיָהוּ must be rendered "the history of Jeremiah," as Kimchi suggested. According to Budde, the divine words spoken by a prophet cannot be called his own, and he notes that Jer. 36:4 uses the designation יְהוָה דְּבַרֵּי יִרְמְיָהוּ. Given this conclusion, he proposes that MT 1:1 presupposes the addition of the narratives, and could not have stood at the beginning of an early collection. Thus LXX 1:1 is more original.<sup>40</sup> Horst also adopted the LXX reading of 1:1, arguing that it better corresponds to Jeremianic views than MT. For Horst, this conclusion requires that 1:2, which in LXX matches MT, must be an insertion, otherwise one is left with a clumsy repetition. Thus vs. 3 forms the original continuation of 1:1, and indicates that Jeremiah did not become active until after Josiah's death. This makes 1:2 later than 1: 1 and 3, and is to be attributed to his postulated writer B who, for purely tendentious reasons, sought to correct writer A's statement in 1:3 by inserting the fictitious date in 1:2.<sup>41</sup> But it should be said that the decision to follow LXX in 1:1 is open to question. The idea that דְּבַרֵּי יִרְמְיָהוּ should not be rendered "words of Jeremiah," which has found support from various exegetes,<sup>42</sup> is tenuous in light of the observation that the expression דְּבַרֵּי יִרְמְיָהוּ is used in 36:10 in referring to the scroll which Baruch read aloud in the temple.<sup>43</sup> The use of דְּבַרֵּי יִרְמְיָהוּ in 36:4 simply indicates that either designation was appropriate for Jeremiah's message, and certainly Amos 1:1 (דְּבַרֵּי עֲמוֹס) provides a parallel for MT's reading in Jer. 1:1. Moreover, it has been noted that following LXX in 1:1 produces an absurd repetition in 1:2.<sup>44</sup> Since such a

<sup>39</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 3; Budde, 1921, 23.

<sup>40</sup>Budde, 1921, 23f.

<sup>41</sup>Horst, 1923a, 97ff, 110.

<sup>42</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 794; Rudolph, 1968, 3; Herrmann, 1986a, 3f, 9, 11f.

<sup>43</sup>Graf, 1862, 1; Duhm, 1901, 2; Giesebrecht, 1907, 1.

<sup>44</sup>Volz, 1920, 1f; Rudolph, 1968, 2.

repetition is unlikely to be original, Budde has proposed that the existence of vs. 2a in LXX is the result of an insertion made in light of MT.<sup>45</sup> However, if it was believed to be necessary to correct LXX 1:2 in relation to MT 1:2, it is reasonable to expect 1:1 to have been corrected as well. But it should also be noted that the back-translation of LXX 1:1 is questionable. McKane notes that ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ may indicate דְּבַר יְהוָה, not דְּבַר אֱלֹהִים.<sup>46</sup> Moreover, λογος, not ῥῆμα, appears in similar headings, and the expression ῥῆμα τοῦ θεοῦ is without parallel in the introductory clauses found in Jeremiah. The most plausible conclusion is to regard MT 1:1 as the original text, with יְרֵמְיָהוּ דְּבַרִּי to be rendered "the words of Jeremiah."<sup>47</sup> It has been suggested that the current Greek reading is an intentional change prompted by the desire to emphasise the divine source of the words, and to obtain a superscription which is more comparable to the usual form.<sup>48</sup> But a particularly significant conclusion to be reached here is that the use of יְרֵמְיָהוּ דְּבַרִּי in 36:10, where it is the name of the scroll read aloud in the temple in 605, indicates that MT 1:1a is the superscription to that scroll.<sup>49</sup>

Following MT 1:1 leads to the issue of 1:2. McKane has noted that the rejection of LXX 1:1 removes evidence cited by Horst that 1:2 is a secondary insertion interrupting an original connection between 1:1 and 3.<sup>50</sup> 1:2a reads אֲשֶׁר הָיָה דְּבַר־יְהוָה אֵלַי, and due to its unusual syntax, has been handled differently. It has been suggested that the current reading of 1:2a represents the alteration of an earlier phrase. According to Stade, this was אֶל־יְרֵמְיָהוּ בְּחֻלְקֵיהוּ דְּבַר יְהוָה אֲשֶׁר הָיָה, which was changed to its current reading when 1:1 was added.<sup>51</sup> Budde suggests that 1:2a is a replacement for the loss of the original reading as found in LXX 1:1.<sup>52</sup> However, it can also be asserted that אֵלַי in 1:2 presupposes יְרֵמְיָהוּ in vs. 1, which accords with the conclusion reached above, i.e. that 1:1 was the superscription of the 605 *Urrolle*, and suggests that 1:1 preceded 1:2. Thus the latter was written in light of 1:1, not changed because of it.

<sup>45</sup>Budde, 1921, 26.

<sup>46</sup>McKane, 1986, 2.

<sup>47</sup>Cf. D. R. Jones, 1992, 63.

<sup>48</sup>Volz, 1920, 1f; Rudolph, 1968, 2; Herrmann, 1986a, 3f; McKane, 1986, 2.

<sup>49</sup>Rietzschel, 135; Rudolph, 1968, 4; Thiel, 1973, 49f. Compare Duhm, 1901, 2, who associates it with the second edition of the scroll.

<sup>50</sup>McKane, 1986, 2.

<sup>51</sup>Stade, 1903, 153ff.

<sup>52</sup>Budde, 1921, 24ff.

But there is another consideration here. It has been widely held that the date in 1:2 is the date of the call narrative in 1:5ff. This is the most plausible explanation for the date, as long as one upholds the authenticity of the call narrative (see section VI). But it has also been suggested that the call narrative was written up independently, therefore not included in the *Urrolle*, and was added to the tradition much later.<sup>53</sup> If this were true, then 1:2 would have preceded 1:1, and thus, as Stade holds, was changed in light of 1:1. However, it is improbable that the call narrative was not in the *Urrolle*. In the year 605, Jeremiah was only one prophetic voice among many, and thus it would have been mandatory to relate the call narrative at the very beginning of the scroll, since that account would have been necessary to impress upon the audience the fact that Jeremiah was a legitimate prophet of Yahweh. In other words, it provided credibility for the prophetic message which followed. Therefore 1:5ff should be regarded as originally located at the front of the scroll of 605.<sup>54</sup> The production of the scroll in 605 provides the best date for when the call narrative was written. Thus 1:1 predates the rest of chapter one, with 1:2 written in light of it, and consequently an older form of 1:2 is not to be sought. Nor was the information currently in 1:2 located anywhere else in chapter one.

This leaves the question of whether *וְאֵלֶיךָ* in 1:2a introduced a dependent clause, or an independent clause. It is usually regarded as the former, with *וְאֵלֶיךָ* referring back to Jeremiah in 1:1, and, in conjunction with *וְאֵלֶיךָ* in 1:2, rendered: "unto whom the word of Yahweh came ..."<sup>55</sup> It has also been proposed that *וְאֵלֶיךָ* actually refers back to "Anathoth," and should be rendered "where."<sup>56</sup> However, Herrmann rightly notes that the same phrase occurs in 14:1; 46:1; 47:1; 49:34, and that 1:2 is not to be treated differently than these cases, thus excluding the sense "where."<sup>57</sup> It is in fact these parallel occurrences which show that 1:2a is an independent clause, with *וְאֵלֶיךָ* not referring back to anything in 1:1. Yet the form in all these passages is odd, since *וְאֵלֶיךָ* begins the clause. Budde argues that the syntax in the parallel occurrences is due to copyist's errors,

<sup>53</sup>Bardtke, 212.

<sup>54</sup>Rietzschel, 135.

<sup>55</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 1; Giesebrecht, 1907, 1; Herrmann, 1986a, 4f.

<sup>56</sup>See Schreiner, 1995, 15f, 27ff.

<sup>57</sup>Herrmann, 1986a, 4f.



whereby אשר יהיה was left out of the original clauses, then written into the margin, and subsequently moved into the wrong place in the text.<sup>58</sup> However, if the resulting phrase were not valid, it is unlikely that a scribe would have continually made the same error. Bardtke regarded the expression as an informal, though careless, expression, and Stade also upheld it, though its supposed poor quality caused him to attribute it to a redactor.<sup>59</sup> The more plausible explanation is that its use in five passages suggests that it was a current variation of the usual phrase, and characteristic of the book of Jeremiah.<sup>60</sup> Given these parallel occurrences, vs. 2 should be rendered: "that which came as the word of Yahweh to Jeremiah..."<sup>61</sup>

This conclusion suggests that vs. 2 introduces something specific, which cannot be found in vs. 3, and, as noted above, is likely to be the call narrative. The question remains as to whether vs. 2 was continued by vs. 4 or vs. 5. Many scholars have regarded some form of vs. 2 to have been connected originally with 1:4.<sup>62</sup> However, given the conclusions reached above on 1:2a, this is unlikely, since if vs. 4 were the continuation of vs. 2, then an introductory clause introduces an introductory clause. Since 1:2 originally introduced a word from Yahweh, and indeed the call narrative, vs. 5 originally followed vs. 2. The reason for the insertion of vs. 4 is clear, i.e. the connection between vv. 2 and 5 was broken by the insertion of vs. 3, which changed the original sense of 1:2, and required the addition of a new introductory clause for 1:5ff (i.e. 1:4).

The above considerations suggest that 1: 1, 2, and 5 was the original reading, the use of the title of the *Urrolle* (i.e. דְּבָרֵי יְרֵמְיָהוּ from 36:10), and the necessity of the call narrative occurring at the front of this document to establish the credibility of the oracles contained in it, indicate that this original reading can be attributed to Baruch and Jeremiah. More will be said about this shortly. Here it should be noted that this approach contributes to understanding the insertion of 1:3. The *Urrolle* was burnt (36:23), and as Jeremiah

<sup>58</sup>Budde, 1921, 24ff.

<sup>59</sup>Bardtke, 212 (ftn. 3); Stade, 1903, 153ff.

<sup>60</sup>Holladay, 1986, 14.

<sup>61</sup>Cf. Ibid.

<sup>62</sup>Cornill, 1895, 1; Giesebrecht, 1907, 2; Rudolph, 1968, 4.



and Baruch set about reproducing it, they made additions to it (36:32). At some point this second scroll had to be complete, and 1:3 indicates this date. The fall of Jerusalem marked a good point in history to conclude this edition, since it marked the fulfilment of Jeremiah's prophesies and the end of his activity under the old Davidic state. The radical change in political and religious circumstances suggested the end of an important stage of history, and thus the conclusion of a significant stage in Jeremiah's prophetic career. Thus it can be concluded that the second edition of the scroll contained more than just the oracular utterances found in the first one. Once Jeremiah came to political prominence in Judah in the wake of the events surrounding the *Urrolle* in 605, accounts of what he experienced in the course of his prophetic activity were also recorded in the scroll as time went on. When the decision was made to end the second scroll with the destruction of Jerusalem, vs. 3 was added to vs. 2 in order to update the superscription. In so doing, the date in vs. 2b, originally intended only as the date of the call narrative, was now used as the beginning point of the time span covered by the second edition. Thus the addition of 1:3 does not indicate that its writers believed that Jeremiah received divine revelation under Josiah only in that king's thirteenth year. At the same time, this also separated vs. 2 from vs. 5, and thus vs. 4 was inserted to compensate. The result was an expanded heading which served as the superscription to chapters 1-39.<sup>63</sup>

#### 4. The Authenticity of Jer. 36.

The previous discussion explained the superscription of 1: 1-4 to be the result of two redactional stages which can be linked to the work of Baruch and Jeremiah on the two scrolls mentioned in Jer. 36. This indicates that the source of the date in 1:2 is Jeremiah himself, and that it came to be in its current position as a result of his dictating the call narrative to Baruch as the introduction to the 605 *Urrolle*. But these considerations naturally raise two other significant issues, namely the reliability of the narrative in chapter 36, and the authenticity of the call narrative in 1:5ff. Both of these

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<sup>63</sup>So Graf, 1862, 3f; Rietzschel, 134; Rudolph, 1968, 3.

issues merit a brief discussion, since some scholars question the historicity of both. While the call narrative will be addressed in section VI, a few observations can be made here on Jer. 36.

Jer. 36 would appear to provide a valuable and unique presentation of an Old Testament prophetic tradition becoming fixed in writing, and indeed, under the auspices of the prophet himself. But it also depicts a two-stage development whereby a second, expanded edition is the result. Finally, the literary agency responsible for this is named, i.e. Baruch ben Neriah.

Consequently, a prominent view among many scholars was that some of the narratives of the Jeremiah tradition, apart from additions and glosses, go back to Baruch. Thus scholars such as Duhm maintain that much of Jer. 36 presents an historically reliable account of how a written Jeremianic tradition originated.<sup>64</sup> But four objections to this view have been subsequently made, and which indicate that at least some of the narrative is not historical. The first such objection concerns the clear parallels which Jer. 36 has with the account of Josiah and the newly discovered law book in 2 Ki. 22: 8-20.<sup>65</sup> These parallels have been set out systematically by scholars such as Isbell and Tillesse,<sup>66</sup> and figure importantly in understanding Jer. 36. A second supposed indicator of the tendentiousness of the account is the highly stylised type of narrative which it represents.<sup>67</sup> Furthermore, as noted in chapter two, many scholars deny a distinction between B-material and C-material, and would thus regard narratives such as Jer. 36 as deriving from Deuteronomistic circles.<sup>68</sup> Finally, there is a tendency to focus on various details of the narrative, and proffer reasons why they cannot reflect real events.<sup>69</sup> However, it should be noted that not all scholars who forward the above objections dismiss the historicity of the entire account. Instead, reliable information to some extent is usually seen as existing in Jer. 36,<sup>70</sup> although that which is historically reliable is often not specifically delineated.

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<sup>64</sup>Duhm, 1901, XIVff, 288ff.

<sup>65</sup>Nielsen, 64ff, 78ff; Rietzschel, 106f; Wanke, 69, 71f, 74, 152, 154; Carroll, 1986, 45, 48, 662ff; 1991, 224.

<sup>66</sup>Isbell, 34ff; Tillesse, 359ff.

<sup>67</sup>Nielsen, 65; Levin, 1985, 147ff.

<sup>68</sup>May, 1942, 139ff; Nicholson, 1970, 38; 1973, 11f.

<sup>69</sup>E. g. McKane, 1996, 903ff.

<sup>70</sup>Rietzschel, 105ff; Nicholson, 1970, 17, 39; 1973, 104. See also Kessler, 390ff; Wanke, 76; McKane, 1996, cxxxiv.

In looking at the question of the relationship between Jer. 36 and 2 Ki. 22, the general tendency is to see the former as dependent upon the latter to some extent, although Tillesse posits the exact opposite.<sup>71</sup> The former tendency is more likely, given the date of the material about Josiah in DtrG followed in chapter two of this study. While the actual development of the events in both accounts is similar, this is to be explained as partly due to the similarity of the type of incident which occurred. Both deal with the presentation of a written document, the significance of which requires that it be brought before the king. The three readings of the document in each case is only natural, since the original discovery or presentation would have to have passed through an intermediary level before it reached the king. This is due to the limited access to monarchs in the ancient Near East in general. The fact that Jeremiah responded to Jehoiakim's reaction with an oracle relating to the king's burial, which is a clear parallel to Huldah's response to Josiah, is to be understood as the result of general knowledge about the incident involving Josiah, with which Jeremiah would have been familiar. Thus Holladay rightly proposes that Jeremiah was familiar with Huldah's oracle in some form,<sup>72</sup> and it should be noted that the prophet himself had specifically compared Jehoiakim to his father on at least one other occasion (22: 13-17). The fate of Jehoiakim's corpse is addressed in 22:18f as well. The stylistic differences<sup>73</sup> between the oracle in 36:29ff and the surrounding narrative is to be expected, given that the author had to insert the prophet's statements into his own narrative framework. Nonetheless, vocabulary used in the account, as well as the note in 36:24 pointing out that Jehoiakim did not tear his garments upon hearing the scroll (cf. 2 Ki. 22:11), clearly indicate familiarity with 2 Ki. 22. Baruch was an official סֵפֶר, and, given the fact that in chapter two it was concluded that the history of the reigns extending from Manasseh up to that of Jehoiakim in DtrG was being produced late in Jehoiakim's reign, it is interesting that some commentators imply that Baruch was familiar with the narrative in 2 Ki. 22.<sup>74</sup> However, it is perhaps better to follow the

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<sup>71</sup>Tillesse, 369.

<sup>72</sup>Holladay, 1989, 64.

<sup>73</sup>Noted by Wanke, 68, 70.

<sup>74</sup>Thompson, 625, 628; Holladay, 1989, 23, 254.

general approach of Wanke, and to posit a second layer of activity in Jer. 36 which intends to establish the parallelism between the two events.<sup>75</sup> Thus the most which should be concluded here is that the similarity of the two incidents prompted a redactor to affirm this parallelism more directly, such as by the insertion of 36:24, but not that the basic event portrayed in Jer. 36 is unreliable.

It is certainly true that Jer. 36 is a highly stylised narrative, and it is indeed right to regard it as one the most skilful examples of Old Testament narrative art.<sup>76</sup> But Baumann has rightly noted that this judgement does not indicate that the account has no historical reliability.<sup>77</sup> The most that can be said is that the author of the basic narrative simply produced a fine historical account, albeit, as was the case in 2 Ki. 22, without providing all the details underlying each step in the narrative. He was interested primarily in portraying the reaction of the state authorities to Yahweh's word as mediated by Jeremiah, and therefore did not provide specific details about aspects not directly relevant to this, e.g. the reason why Jeremiah was banned from the temple (36:5), the reason for the fast (vv. 6, 9), etc. As was maintained in chapter one in relation to 2 Ki. 22, the stylised nature of the account does not impugn the historicity of the events narrated, although there are questions which are left unanswered.

The claim that the prose narratives and prose sermons emanate from the same basic source is indeed correct, but it is not the case that this source is a group of Deuteronomistic redactors. The issue of the *Kunstprosa* was discussed in chapter two, where it was concluded that it was a style with its *Sitz im Leben* in seventh-sixth century Judah, and should not be denied to Jeremiah. Moreover, while similarities between the *Prosareden* and narrative prose clearly exist, it is significant that Thiel upholds a general distinction between the Deuteronomistic work and older narrative material, and, in the case of Jer. 36, finds the Deuteronomistic element in this chapter to be very limited (vv. 3, 7, 31).<sup>78</sup> Various scholars have proposed that both types of material should be attributed to

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<sup>75</sup>Wanke, 72.

<sup>76</sup>So Nielsen, 65; Rietzschel, 107; Wanke, 71.

<sup>77</sup>Baumann, 350 (note 1).

<sup>78</sup>Thiel, 1981, 49ff.



Baruch,<sup>79</sup> and as long as the *Kunstprosa* is held to derive from Jeremiah, and some narrative prose from Baruch, this assessment is basically sound.

The final approach to Jer. 36 which holds that it is at least in part tendentious, as noted above, focuses on various particulars in the larger narrative, and declares that events could not have unfolded in the way described. As discussed in chapter one, 2 Ki. 22 often experiences a similar treatment. This general approach is a highly subjective one, which tends to decide arbitrarily in what way a particular thing should happen. But it can also be said that the difficulty here lies in the fact that the narratives do not provide all the underlying details necessary to understand the more subtle facets of the accounts. The most that results from this is that not all the questions which one can ask about the events recorded in the narratives can be answered with certainty. The basic development in Jer. 36 contains nothing *per se* which is problematic to its general reliability, although we are not provided with the kind of details which, if known, would allow for a more precise understanding of the sequence of events.

If Jer. 36 can be regarded as basically providing a historically reliable account of the production of the first written collection of Jeremianic material, and the beginning of a second edition of it, then Baruch's role as Jeremiah's סֵפֶר in producing these documents makes him the most likely author of the account itself. The witness for this provided by Jer. 36 argues against more speculative views concerning the chapter's author, such as the family of Shaphan, a supporter of Gedaliah at Mizpah, or an official present at the events narrated in the chapter.<sup>80</sup> Clearly the most tangible evidence points to Baruch. Objections to him fulfilling this role for reasons such as the claim that he would not have known about what happened after he read the scroll to the officials,<sup>81</sup> or that references to Baruch himself are in the third person and historical narratives about Jeremiah's life in Egypt are lacking,<sup>82</sup> are not convincing. Baruch would have learned about the king's reaction to the scroll from

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<sup>79</sup>Pfeiffer, 301f; Muilenberg, 232f, 237.

<sup>80</sup>Pace Lohfink, 1978, 336ff; Wanke, 146; Jacoby, 26f, and Rietzschel, 105ff, respectively.

<sup>81</sup>Jacoby, 26f; Rietzschel, 105f.

<sup>82</sup>Wanke, 146.



some of the officials who were present, since Jeremiah was on friendly terms with two families influential at the court, i.e. the families of Shaphan and Achbor. This is indicated by the fact that Elnathan and Gemariah urged Jehoiakim not to burn the scroll (reading MT), and the fact that they advised Jeremiah and Baruch to hide before presenting the scroll to the king suggests that their ability to avoid arrest (36:26) throughout Jehoiakim's reign may be due to assistance from these officials. The fact that Baruch refers to himself only in the third person is undoubtedly due to the fact that he was merely an assistant to Jeremiah. It was the latter who was the master, and it is therefore natural that the first person in the tradition should be that of Yahweh and Jeremiah. The lack of narratives about Jeremiah's life in Egypt, and the authenticity of Jer. 44 should probably not be dismissed,<sup>83</sup> may well be due to the prophet's death having occurred not long after settling there.

The above considerations suggest that those scholars who uphold the Baruchian authorship of Jer. 36 are correct.<sup>84</sup> This suggests that the conclusions reached earlier about the superscription in 1: 1-4 are tenable, and provide the further indication that, since Jeremiah and Baruch were themselves involved in the redactional work of the prophet's traditions, the information in the book which links Jeremiah with Josiah's reign, and most importantly the 627 date found in 1:2, derive from the prophet himself.

#### IV. Alternative Approaches to the 627 Date.

As noted in the introduction to section III, many scholars do not regard the date in 1:2 as a redactional creation. It has been viewed as both an error for a different date, or as marking an event other than the actual beginning of Jeremiah's activity as a prophet. It is appropriate to begin with the former.

Gordon has noted that the two Hebrew numbers שלש-עשרה ("thirteenth") and שלש-עשרים ("twenty-third") are very similar, and therefore it is plausible that the current reading in 1:2 is a copyist's error involving confusion between the final *mem* in the latter

<sup>83</sup>Pace Wanke, 146 (ftn. 2).

<sup>84</sup>Bright, 1965, 182; Muilenberg, 238; Thompson, 43, 621; Holladay, 1989, 23, 254.

number, and the *he* in the former. By correcting it to read "twenty-third year of Josiah," he obtains a date of 617/616.<sup>85</sup> The same approach was adopted by Bardtke, who, while acknowledging that the current reading may be a copyist's error, also regarded it as possible that an intentional change has taken place.<sup>86</sup> Clearly the latter would suggest a tendentious act on the part of redactors, which was discussed in section III. But the idea of an accidental textual corruption has too many points against it. It has been noted that there is no textual support for an error,<sup>87</sup> neither within MT, nor in the versions. Moreover, McKane has emphasised that the repetition of the 627 date in 25:3 makes corruption unlikely.<sup>88</sup> But it should also be noted that 25:3 does actually contain the number twenty-three (שְׁלֹשׁ וָעֶשְׂרִים), where it clearly refers to the amount of time which has passed since the prophet's call, in relation to the fourth year of Jehoiakim. Thus 25:3 doubly confirms the date as found in 1:2.

Far more involved proposals have been forwarded by Holladay and Lundbom. The views of the former developed from the position formulated by Hyatt, which holds that the 627 date in 1:2 is not the date at which Jeremiah became active, but rather the date of his birth. With this presupposition, Hyatt concluded that Jeremiah first became active after Josiah's death in 609.<sup>89</sup> This represented a change from his earlier view, according to which the date in 1:2 was regarded as a redactional fiction, and the commencement of Jeremiah's career was to be dated to some time between 614-610 (see III. 2). The reason for equating the date in 1:2 with Jeremiah's birth is clear, i.e. Yahweh's assertion that He had known Jeremiah before forming him within the womb, and that he had been chosen to be a prophet before his birth. The equating of 627 with Jeremiah's birth has found acceptance among other scholars.<sup>90</sup>

Clearly the most significant development of Hyatt's proposal is found in the work of Holladay. He brought in several issues relevant to the nature of the 627 date. As noted in section II, two of these are the reflection of influence from Deuteronomy in Jer. 1, and

<sup>85</sup>Gordon, 1931, 106; 1932/3, 564.

<sup>86</sup>Bardtke, 218ff.

<sup>87</sup>Herrmann, 1986a, 21; Schreiner, 1995, 12f.

<sup>88</sup>McKane, 1986, 3.

<sup>89</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 779f, 798; 1966, 204ff.

<sup>90</sup>Gottwald, 395f; Grant, 154.

the significance of Jeremiah's age at that time, as it relates to the declaration of celibacy in 16:1ff. These two issues will be addressed in sections IX and X. At this point it should be noted that he adopted a suggestion from Lundbom, which connects Jer. 15:16 with the discovery of the law book in the temple. In MT, 15:16a states that Yahweh's words had been found, and that the prophet ate them, taking great delight in this. The LXX presents a very different text than MT, reading וַיֵּאָכְל as ἔφαγε (ὕπο τῶν ἀθετούντων), and joining the first two words of vs.16a to the end of vs. 15. Then וַיֵּאָכְל was read as ἐσθίον (συντέλεσον), and וַיֵּאָכְל instead of וַיֵּאָכְל (ἔσται).<sup>91</sup> Thus in LXX, Jeremiah tells Yahweh that he has endured reproach for His sake from those who despise His words, and tells God that the divine word will be a delight to him if only He would slay these persecutors. Some scholars have opted for the supposed *Vorlage* of the LXX, primarily because the image in MT is regarded as out of context, inappropriate to Jeremiah, unpleasant, or nonsensical.<sup>92</sup> However, it has been argued that the image of Ezekiel eating a scroll in 2:8ff as symbolic of the reception of divine revelation argues in favour of the originality of the Massoretic reading, and it has been noted that both וַיֵּאָכְל and וַיֵּאָכְל are used together in this way in Ezek. 3:1.<sup>93</sup> Certainly the idea of Jeremiah 'eating' Yahweh's word is a logical development of the image found in 1:9, where Yahweh touches the prophet's mouth and thereby imparts the divine word to him. The objection has been made that Jeremiah's message of judgement and disaster was too painful for him to experience joy and delight as he internalised it.<sup>94</sup> But this overlooks the fact that despite the nature of the message, it is still Yahweh's word, and the prophet may experience joy in receiving and declaring the word of his God.<sup>95</sup> Thus Volz is probably right in asserting that the current LXX reading is the result of the translator not understanding the image.<sup>96</sup>

Following the Massoretic text in 15:16, Holladay and Lundbom point to the fact that the use of the verb וַיֵּאָכְל as a niphal, along with the noun וַיֵּאָכְל, appears only in two other Old Testament passages: 2

<sup>91</sup>For the Hebrew back-translations, see Duhm, 1901, 135f; BHS CA.

<sup>92</sup>Duhm, 1901, 135f; Cornill, 1905, 197; Hyatt, 1956, 942.

<sup>93</sup>Volz, 1928, 173; Holladay, 1966, 22f; 1986, 458; McKane, 1986, 350ff.

<sup>94</sup>Duhm, 1901, 135f; Cornill, 1905, 197.

<sup>95</sup>McKane, 1986, 353.

<sup>96</sup>Volz, 1928, 173.

Ki. 22:13; 23:2. Significantly, both of these passages concern the finding of the law book in 622. Thus both commentators conclude that 15:16 refers to the prophet's reaction to this event.<sup>97</sup> Holladay further links 15:16 to 1:9, arguing that both passages describe the same thing, i.e. Jeremiah's reaction to the discovery of the book in the temple. However, noting that *וְאַתָּה* is a vav-consecutive, Holladay maintains that Jeremiah did not become active as a prophet in 622, but rather at a time later than the events of that year. Originally, Holladay followed Hyatt (1956) and opted for the date 609, but later moved this date back to 615, influenced by Lohfink's assertion that Jeremiah had functioned as a prophetic propagandist for Josiah, actively supporting the king's attempt to annex Northern Israel.<sup>98</sup> Thus after the discovery of Deuteronomy in 622, the young Jeremiah regarded it as Yahweh's word, and became aware that his God planned to use him in furthering His divine will. But it was not until 615, following the second septennial reading of Deuteronomy, that Jeremiah began his prophetic activity.

However, there are considerable difficulties inherent in the idea that 627 represents the date of Jeremiah's birth, and that 15:16 reflects Jeremiah's reactions to the events of 622. Many commentators who reject this approach tend to emphasise the fact that a date of birth is not provided for any other Old Testament prophet.<sup>99</sup> While this is true, it is not a cogent argument against the birth-date hypothesis, since each prophet is a distinct individual, and not slavishly dependent on what other prophets have done. However, Lundbom has noted the fatal flaw, namely that the statements made in 1:5 do not refer to Jeremiah's birth. Instead, they refer to a time not only *before* (*בְּטֶרֶם*) Jeremiah's birth, but even before his conception ("before I formed you in the womb"). Thus the meaning of 1:5 is not that Jeremiah had been chosen by Yahweh at his birth, but rather that he had been chosen at a distant time prior to it.<sup>100</sup> Therefore the two-fold use of *בְּטֶרֶם* is significant. But it should also be noted that 1:2 speaks of the word of Yahweh

<sup>97</sup>Holladay, 1966, 21ff; Lundbom, 1976, 302 (ftn. 34); 1993, 67ff; cf. Thompson, 396.

<sup>98</sup>For 609, see 1964, 160f; 1966, 17; 1981, 62f; for 615, see 1983, 147f; 1985, 327f; 1986, 1f, 14f, 17; 1989, 25ff.

<sup>99</sup>Thiel, 1973, 61; Herrmann, 1986a, 21; 1990, 6; Schreiner, 1995, 15f.

<sup>100</sup>Lundbom, 1993, 63.



"coming" to Jeremiah in 627, and God could not have sent His word to a new-born infant. In 25:3, Jeremiah clearly states that he had been receiving divine revelation since 627. This suggests that the date in 1:2 represents the point at which Jeremiah began to receive God's word, and in particular, was informed that he had been chosen to be a prophet long before he was conceived. This consideration also argues against the birth-date hypothesis,<sup>101</sup> which therefore remains tenuous.

At the same time, the significance attached to 15:16 is also open to question. First there is the issue of the similarity between the syntax of 15:16 and 2 Ki. 22:13; 23:2. In the former, the verb *נִמְצָא* does have *דְּבָרֶיךָ* as its subject. But in 2 Ki. 22:13 ( *הַסֵּפֶר הַנִּמְצָא הוּא* ) and 23:2 ( *אֶת־כָּל־דְּבָרֵי סֵפֶר הַבְּרִית הַנִּמְצָא* ), *הַנִּמְצָא* is singular, and modifies *סֵפֶר*, not *דְּבָרֵי*. A contrast is provided by 23:3 ( *הַזֹּאת הַכְּתוּבִים* ), where the plural verb clearly modifies *דְּבָרֵי*. Thus it was the book which was found in 2 Ki. 22:13 and 23:2, not the words, and the similarity is not as strong as one might wish. But the relationship between 15:16 and 1:9 is also pertinent. Holladay acknowledges this connection, but Lundbom questions it. He posits that the prophet taking pleasure in Yahweh's words in 15:16 is incompatible with the resistance he offered to his call in 1:6.<sup>102</sup> While it was noted earlier that McKane's assessment of how the word of Yahweh could be both delightful and painful at the same time is correct, it should also be pointed out that 1:6 speaks not of apprehension about Yahweh's word itself, but rather about the daunting task of being God's spokesman. Moreover, this timidity precedes the act of placing the divine message in Jeremiah's mouth (1:9), which is the point at which he would express his own feelings about that message if he was going to do so. Therefore there is nothing in 1:6 to preclude the clear connection between 15:16 and 1:9. This leads to an identification of the "words" of 15:16. They are not those of the temple scroll discovered in 622, nor a collection of oracles from earlier prophets,<sup>103</sup> but rather the words which Yahweh placed in Jeremiah's mouth in 1:9, i.e. his prophetic message. Thus in 15:15ff, Jeremiah reflects on the hardships which the acceptance of the

<sup>101</sup>Craigie, 3.

<sup>102</sup>Lundbom, 1993, 76.

<sup>103</sup>Pace Berridge, 1970, 119.



prophetic role has entailed. Finally it can be said that it is difficult to understand why, if 1:9 and 15:16 refer to the discovery of Deuteronomy in 622, the prophet did not begin prophesying at that time. In other words, if God had placed His words in the mouth of Jeremiah, and he ingested them at that time, why wait until 609 or 615 to begin his ministry? The answer is readily apparent; if Jeremiah were born in 627, then he was only five years old in 622.<sup>104</sup> Thus Holladay's attempt to link 15:16 with both 1:9 and the events of 622 necessitates the view that a five year old boy had been strongly enough moved by Deuteronomy to perceive that he had been chosen to be Yahweh's spokesman. Lundbom rightly notes that if 15:16 is to be equated with the events of 622, then it is more feasible that Jeremiah actually began preaching at that time.<sup>105</sup>

Finally, the position of Lundbom must be noted. He upholds the date of 627 as that of the prophet's call, but maintains that this was not accepted until 622, after the discovery of the temple scroll, which, as noted earlier, he connects with 15:16. His reconstruction centres on his view of the rhetorical structures of 1: 1-19, whereby vv. 4-12 relate to the call (627), and vv. 13-19 relate to the commission (622). Thus chapter one betrays a chiasmic structure involving four elements: the call and its accompanying vision on the one hand, and the vision accompanying the commission and the commission itself on the other. He suggests four reasons for separating the call and commission with a long time-gap. First, assuming that נָעַר in 1:6 means "boy" and indicates an age of twelve or thirteen, Jeremiah would need to have been about eighteen years old to begin prophesying, so he would have had to have waited several years. Secondly, the occurrence of שֵׁנִית ("second time") in 1:13 indicates such a time-gap. Third, the vision of the kettle deals with the threat from Babylon, and therefore cannot have occurred in 627. Finally, there is no actual acceptance of the call in chapter one, and this suggests the passage of time between call and commission. The length of this time-gap is determined by considerations of Jeremiah's age, and the connection drawn between 15:16 and the events of 622.<sup>106</sup> Thus the 627 call-date is

<sup>104</sup>Holladay, 1986, 1.

<sup>105</sup>Lundbom, 1976, 302 (ftn. 34); 1993, 75.

<sup>106</sup>Lundbom, 1991, 193ff; 1993, 67ff; see also 1975, 96ff.

upheld, and a later commencement for Jeremiah's activity is obtained.

However, this reconstruction is open to question on several points. The first concerns the idea that Jeremiah really had the option not to accept the call. The fact that Yahweh simply brushes aside Jeremiah's objection in 1:6 argues against this. In 1:7, Jeremiah is told that his protestation is invalid, and he *will* do as he is told. Before Jeremiah can respond, God places His words in his mouth, and thus it is too late, he is Yahweh's prophet. In 20:9, Jeremiah attests to the fact that he had no choice about announcing the divine word, since he had indeed at some point tried to refuse to deliver Yahweh's message. But it remained within him like a fire, and he could not hold it back. Secondly, the length of the time-gap proposed is tenuous. The question of Jeremiah's age is particularly significant here. Lundbom translates נָעַר as "boy," with an age of twelve or thirteen. Taking this position naturally requires several years before public appearances were possible. But one can dispute that "boy" is correct here. The word נָעַר is indeed used in this sense, being applied to the boy Samuel (1 Sam. 2:18; 3:1), and in Prov. 20:11; 22:6; 29:15, the meaning "boy" is appropriate. The word is even used of infants (1 Sam. 1:22, 24; 4:21; Isa. 11:6). But it is also frequently used of older males, such as Josiah at the age of sixteen (2 Chr. 34:3), Solomon at his accession (1 Ki. 3:7), and Joseph at the age of thirty (Gen. 41: 12, 46). Even more noteworthy is the application of נָעַר to males in active military service: Gen. 14:24; 1 Sam. 14:1, 13; and in 2 Sam. 18:32, Absalom, currently leading an uprising against David, is called a נָעַר. Thus the latter word by itself is not indicative of a specific age.<sup>107</sup> Solomon's statement in 1 Ki. 3:7 is pertinent here, since his trepidation is not about his age, but rather his inexperience, i.e. he does not know "how to go out or come in." This supports both the contention that in 1:6, Jeremiah pleads his lack of experience not his age *per se*,<sup>108</sup> as well as the suggestion that he was a young man at the time.<sup>109</sup> Thus there is no reason to begin with the supposition that Jeremiah must have been a mere boy in 627. It is also worth noting that Yahweh refuses the objection, which would not make sense if Jeremiah were twelve

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<sup>107</sup>MacDonald, 147ff.

<sup>108</sup>McKane, 1986, 7.

<sup>109</sup>Duhm, 1901, 7.

years old, since he would be too young to prophesy publicly. Thus in 1:7f, Yahweh is saying that Jeremiah's inexperience is irrelevant. It can also be said that the lack of an acceptance of the call is still present even with Lundbom's reconstruction. Thus he asserts that the commission presupposes the acceptance.<sup>110</sup> But this absence is to be explained in light of the comments made earlier, i.e. Jeremiah has no choice, he must accept. In the case of Moses, who puts up more of a fight than Jeremiah, there is no explicit acceptance of his call (Exod. 3f). God simply overrules his objections, and Moses sets about his task. As will be discussed shortly, the other occurrences of *וַיִּקְרָא* in introductory clauses do not support such a lengthy gap either. It should also be noted that dating the vision of the kettle to a much later time because it deals with the foe has been common. This will be discussed below, but here it can be noted that one does not remove the problem by dating it to 622. If the foe is assumed to be Babylon from the beginning, and chapter four of this study will show this to be unlikely, then 622 is still too early for this vision, and Lundbom himself says that Babylon did not become a real threat until 612.<sup>111</sup> Thus when he proceeds to date much of Jeremiah's foe oracles to the period after 614-612, and state that it was not until 605 that he actually identified the foe as Babylon,<sup>112</sup> the date 622 for the beginning of Jeremiah's career becomes problematic. Finally, 1:9 is still regarded by him as part of the call. But in this passage, Yahweh's words are placed in Jeremiah's mouth, and thus he has received his prophetic message. It is not that God has promised to do this,<sup>113</sup> He has done it. It is logical to believe that once Jeremiah had the divine word, he would speak it. After all, according to 20:9 it was impossible to hold it back. The supposition that 15:16 refers to the events of 622 was discussed and rejected earlier.

## V. The Relationship of the Two Visual Signs to One Another.

There remains the question of the relationship of the two visual signs to one another, and whether a five year gap should be

<sup>110</sup>Lundbom, 1991, 207, 209.

<sup>111</sup>*Ibid.*, 200.

<sup>112</sup>*Ibid.*, 1992, 688; 1993, 91f, 96.

<sup>113</sup>*Pace* Lundbom, 1993, 207f.

supposed between them. The idea that the two visual signs were separate from one another was maintained by Erbt and Stade. The former believed that the two visual signs reflect different points in Jeremiah's career, with 1:11f presupposing the passage of a long period of time during which Jeremiah had not yet seen his message confirmed, whereas vv. 13f reflect the foe from the north, and may date to the earliest period of Jeremiah's activity. The latter assertion is, however, based on his acceptance of the Scythian hypothesis.<sup>114</sup> Stade regarded vv. 13-16 as originally the introduction to 4:5ff because of the foe theme, although he is less specific about where 1:11f originally belonged. He later dropped the idea that 1:13ff introduced 4:5ff, and may have dropped the idea that the two visual signs were originally separate.<sup>115</sup>

The idea that 1:11f presupposes a long period of activity on Jeremiah's part is tenuous. The issue here is what "word" Yahweh is watching over to carry out. The position of Erbt suggests that it is the word which Jeremiah has proclaimed. However, there is nothing in vv. 11f to suggest that he had been announcing that message. Therefore some suggest that the vision of the almond rod is meant to assure Jeremiah that what is said in vv. 9f will come to pass.<sup>116</sup> Thus while Yahweh touching Jeremiah's mouth in 1:9 serves the important "sign" function found in various call narratives, the visual signs in 11ff can be seen as further signs.<sup>117</sup> In other words, 1:9 is a sign that Jeremiah has truly received Yahweh's word, whereas 1:11f is a sign that Yahweh will carry out this word. The latter reassures the prophet that even though its fulfilment may be delayed, he will see its actualisation.<sup>118</sup> At the same time, a retrospective element in vv. 11f should not be dismissed, since Jeremiah stood at the end of a long line of prophets. Thus the vision of the almond rod also assures Jeremiah that the prophetic word in general will come to fulfilment in his activity.<sup>119</sup> Therefore the sign of the almond rod both looks to the future and is retrospective, but does not indicate that Jeremiah had been prophesying at the time he experienced it.

<sup>114</sup>Erbt, 120ff.

<sup>115</sup>Stade, 1903, 156; 1905, 252; 1906, 97ff.

<sup>116</sup>Volz, 1928, 89; Rudolph, 1968, 11.

<sup>117</sup>Habel, 1965, 309 (ftn. 28); 1968, 42; Holladay, 1986, 31.

<sup>118</sup>Graf, 1862, 8.

<sup>119</sup>Welch, 1928, 47ff.



The sign of the kettle should be viewed as inseparably linked to the preceding one. It has been suggested that the real vision should be limited to vv. 13f, with vv. 15f being an addition.<sup>120</sup> Lundbom rightly proposes that vv. 15f are part of the unit comprising vv. 15-19, noting the chiasmic structure involving "cities" and "walls" in vv. 15 and 18, the alternation of the first and second person pronouns in vv. 15, 17, and 18, and the fact that the fate of Judah and Jerusalem (vs. 15) is contrasted with that of Jeremiah (vv. 18f).<sup>121</sup> Thus while vv. 15f are not part of the vision, they are part of a unit intimately dependent upon it, and which serves a function too important to permit these verses to be regarded as an addition (see section VIII). The relationship of the second vision to the first is not to be seen as one of complementary meaning, whereby the almond rod of 1:11f is interpreted as a symbol of judgement, the clear meaning of vv. 13f.<sup>122</sup> There is nothing in the first vision itself to suggest judgement, and the significance of the almond rod (שֶׁקֶד) is its assonance with שָׁקֵד "watching," i.e. Yahweh's mindfulness. Nor is the relationship one of complementary function, whereby the vision of the kettle, like that of the almond branch, is meant to give Jeremiah courage as he undertakes his prophetic career,<sup>123</sup> since this is the purpose of vv. 9 and 11f. Skinner has rightly noted that the first vision "expresses a general principle of prophecy," whereas the second is the "concrete application." Thus vv. 13f define the word over which Yahweh watches.<sup>124</sup> This word is a word of judgement, and the threat of divinely wrought calamity underlies much of Jeremiah's message.

Yet one final issue is relevant here. Lundbom sees in וַיֵּרָא in 1:13 an indication of a time-gap, and consequently an intervening span of time between Jeremiah's call and first public appearances. Herrmann maintains that וַיֵּרָא actually has a *Klammerfunktion*, i.e. binding the two visual signs closely together.<sup>125</sup> This is acknowledged by Erbt and Stade, who must therefore posit that וַיֵּרָא is a secondary addition intended to serve this function.<sup>126</sup> But

<sup>120</sup>Herrmann, 1986a, 48, 51, 54f; Niditch, 1983, 45ff; Levin, 1985, 149f.

<sup>121</sup>Lundbom, 1991, 201, 204f; cf. Duhm, 1901, 13f, on the pronouns.

<sup>122</sup>*Pace* Targum, which interprets the rod as Nebuchadrezzar; Wood, 99ff.

<sup>123</sup>*Pace* Cornill, 1907, 105f.

<sup>124</sup>Skinner, 1948, 32.

<sup>125</sup>Herrmann, 1986a, 74.

<sup>126</sup>Erbt, 118; Stade, 1903, 156.



clearly there is no textual justification for this proposal, nor any reason not to believe that it was the prophet himself who joined the visual signs together in this way.<sup>127</sup> Its presence in 1:13 is meant to mark the second sign for which an interpretation is given and introduced with the question "what do you see?" Since Yahweh's message was placed in Jeremiah's mouth (1:9), and vv. 11f promises that God is mindful of it, one can expect that a description of this word would come at approximately the same time. The use of *שָׁנִית* in 1:13 is found also in Jer. 13:3; 33:1; Jon. 3:1; and Hag. 2:20. In 13:1, Yahweh tells Jeremiah to get a sash and put it on, and 13:2 records that Jeremiah complied. *שָׁנִית* is used to introduce Yahweh's next command, i.e. to take it and hide it. The amount of time which passed is not stated, but the development of the narrative indicates that it was quite short, since obtaining the sash was only a preparation for the main action. Thus the development in vv. 1-5 involves a quick succession (contrast "after many days" in 13:6). In 33:1, *שָׁנִית* stands in relation to what is narrated in chapter 32. In both chapters, Jeremiah is imprisoned in the "prison court." Chapter 32 is dated to Zedekiah's tenth year, i.e. 588/587, and it is known that Jeremiah remained in the prison court until Jerusalem fell in the fourth month of 587 (38:28; 39:2). Originally he had been kept in the prison "dungeon" (37:16; 38:6), but was later moved to the prison court. Since in both chapters 32 and 33 he is in the prison court, the maximum amount of time which could have passed, assuming the first month of Zedekiah's tenth year, was one year and four months. But this is the theoretical maximum, the amount was probably much shorter. According to 37:16 he had been in the prison dungeon for "many days" before being transferred, and Lundbom suggests that the time-gap was only a few days or weeks.<sup>128</sup> In the case of Jon. 3:1, *שָׁנִית* is used in relation to 1:1, and the amount of time between the occurrences of the divine word would be the three days of 2:1, added to the number of days the ship had travelled before Jonah was tossed overboard. Given that he was asleep in the hold of the ship as it left, and was still sleeping when the tempest arose (1:5), this was probably the same day. Hag. 2:20 is instructive. *שָׁנִית* marks the second time that Haggai received

<sup>127</sup>Zimmerli, 1982, 106.

<sup>128</sup>Lundbom, 1991, 203.

the divine word on the twenty-fourth day of the month. The chronological structure of chapter two indicates that the month in question was the ninth month (2:18) of Darius' second year (2:10). Thus שְׁנִיָּהּ is used to denote the second time Yahweh spoke with Haggai on the same day. Thus in the case of Jer. 1:11f and 13f, שְׁנִיָּהּ can mark a very short passage of time, and when it is noted that Jeremiah was not a boy in 627, and that 15:16 does not refer to the events of 622, one is left with the conclusion that the second sign very quickly followed the first, and provided a brief encapsulation of the message with which he had just been entrusted.

#### VI. The Authenticity of Jer. 1: 4-14.

The above discussion of the relationship of the two visual signs to one another also touched upon the relationship between the two visual signs and the account of the call in vv. 4-10. But this latter issue has been disputed, and merits further discussion. At the same time, there is also the larger issue of the authenticity of chapter one in general. The authenticity of the current call narrative has been questioned by several commentators. Looking specifically at vv. 4-14 at this point, it is customary to separate vv. 4-10 from vv. 11-14 (see section VII). Scholars who question the authenticity of much of chapter one are divided about the two visual signs. It has been proposed that they are the work of later redactors, primarily because of the similarities these signs have with those found in Amos.<sup>129</sup> However, such an explanation is based on a rigid insistence on literary dependence, and is therefore tenuous. According to Stade, the most one can conclude is that there was a basic *Gattung* for reporting such visual signs, and thus similarities are only natural.<sup>130</sup> At the same time, it cannot be ruled out that Jeremiah was familiar with currently developing traditions associated with Amos, in the same way as he was acquainted with Hoseanic traditions. But this does not require literary dependence, since such traditions may still have been in an oral form. It is worth noting that other scholars who reject the authenticity of the rest of chapter one, nonetheless uphold a connection between the two

<sup>129</sup>Levin, 1985, 151, 153; Schreiner, 1995, 13.

<sup>130</sup>So Stade, 1906, 121.

visual signs and the historical Jeremiah to some extent.<sup>131</sup> There is nothing in their current form to indicate that they are not authentic.

In the case of vv. 4-10, objection to the material deriving from Jeremiah and Baruch often focuses on Jeremiah's portrayal as a prophet to the nations. This element is found in 1:5b (לְגוֹיִם), and in vs. 10, where Jeremiah is given the power of destruction and restoration over "nations and kingdoms." It has been asserted that the idea of a Judahite prophet being given world-wide authority and power must be linked to the post-exilic, theocratic period, at which time the Jewish community tended to see its own circumstances as being the focal point of world history. This later idea is thus reflected in Jeremiah's call, and is inconsistent with pre-exilic concepts. Duhm concludes that the writer of Jer. 1: 4-10 must be the same one who produced 25:15ff, where Jeremiah distributes the cup of cursing to the various nations, thus indicating a post-exilic date.<sup>132</sup> The presence of this concept in the call narrative has led others to uphold a post-exilic date for it.<sup>133</sup> Herrmann holds that the account contains a Deuteronomistic layer and a post-Deuteronomistic layer, which had been constructed around the two visual signs in vv. 11-14, after they had been expanded with vv. 15f.<sup>134</sup> However, there is an important observation which should be made here. Many commentators have disputed the claim that the concept described above cannot be attributed to Jeremiah, albeit with a different understanding of it.<sup>135</sup> But even if, for the sake of argument, one grants the point that it is a late concept, it is significant that the representation of this concept within chapter one is isolated to two specific places, i.e. לְגוֹיִם in 1:5b, and vs. 10. It is readily apparent that both could be removed without any disruption to the account whatsoever. This is in fact the approach to chapter one followed by Stade, who emends לְגוֹיִם to read לְגוֹי or לְעַמִּי ("to my people"), and regards vs. 10 to be an insertion.<sup>136</sup> This proposal is supported by the fact that if the whole of vv. 4-10 was written by a post-exilic writer seeking to portray Jeremiah in light of a later concept, one can expect that it would permeate the

<sup>131</sup>Duhm, 1901, 2, 11; Herrmann, 1986a, 49ff; McKane, 1986, 15, 24.

<sup>132</sup>Duhm, 1901, 2, 6f, 9f.

<sup>133</sup>McKane, 1986, 6f, 9, 14, 24f.

<sup>134</sup>Herrmann, 1986a, 46, 49ff.

<sup>135</sup>Cornill, 1905, 11f; 1907, 104.

<sup>136</sup>Stade, 1902, 328; 1903, 155f; 1906, 97ff (117!).

account far more than it does. The claim that the call narrative is dependent literarily upon that of Isaiah<sup>137</sup> overlooks the substantial differences, and once again, nothing prohibits Jeremiah from being familiar with some Isaianic traditions any more than those of Amos or Hosea. Nor does the narrative itself presuppose that Jeremiah's prophetic message had been fulfilled.<sup>138</sup> It is unlikely that an individual would take upon himself such a task as Jeremiah had done without feeling assured at some level that the deity in whose service he perceived himself to be called would fulfil his message. The fact that it eventually was fulfilled is the reason for the community's preservation of the Jeremianic traditions. Apart from vv. 17-19, which will be discussed in section VIII, there is very little in 1:4ff which can be held to be Deuteronomistic, and Mowinckel assigns vv. 4-16 to his source A.<sup>139</sup> While the basic similarities between the call narrative in Jer. 1 and those found elsewhere in the Old Testament indicate the existence of a *Gattung* for such accounts,<sup>140</sup> the use of such a format does not call the account into question, since it only provides a rough pattern for relating Jeremiah's own experience. Therefore the general reliability of the event narrated in vv. 4ff should be upheld.

## VII. The Relationship of 1: 4-10 and Vv. 11-14

This leaves the issue of the relationship of the two visual signs to the call in vv. 4-10. A general view was presented earlier when the relationship between the two signs was discussed. However, several scholars have proposed that the two visual signs were not originally part of the call narrative. Three lines of argumentation are discernible here. Thiel limits the call narrative to vv. 4-8 (minus 7b $\beta$ ), eliminating 1:9f, and regards the two visual signs in vv. 11ff as taken from elsewhere by the redactor responsible for the final form of chapter one. 1:9b $\beta$  is removed because of its similarity with Deut. 18:18b, an issue which will be discussed in section X. However, vs. 9a and the two visual signs are excluded because the

<sup>137</sup>So Levin, 1985, 149ff, who regards the original form to be an exilic composition.

<sup>138</sup>Pace Levin, 1985, 149ff.

<sup>139</sup>Mowinckel, 1913, 20.

<sup>140</sup>Habel, 1965, 305; Schreiner, 1967, 12f. Baltzer, 567ff, discusses an ancient Egyptian parallel to this.



entire call-event is regarded as a purely auditory experience.<sup>141</sup> A second approach focuses on *וַיִּרְאֵהוּ* in 1:13. Bright has argued that if the visual signs were originally connected with vv. 4-10, then the introductory phrase in 1:13 would have to read "third time," since this would be the third occurrence of the introductory phrase in chapter one (i.e. 1:4, 11, 13).<sup>142</sup> Lundbom discusses this in relation to his proposal to separate vv. 4-12 from 13ff.<sup>143</sup> Finally, a third approach dates the visual signs to a much later time than the call because the boiling kettle is symbolic of the coming of the northern foe, and thus must be set in relation to Judah's conflict with Babylon.<sup>144</sup>

In looking at the approach of Thiel, it can be said that the argument is rather circular, i.e. the call experience is purely auditory only after that which is visual is removed. But it is also debatable that what takes place in 1:9a is really a vision. Duhm maintained that 1:9 reflects a visionary experience, and that this disrupts the impression created by vv. 4-8, which appears as if it were an internal process.<sup>145</sup> In spite of the fact that vs. 9a is often regarded as a vision, one is justified in questioning this. There is nothing in vv. 1-9 which suggests that any kind of theophany took place. This is a substantial difference with the calls of Isaiah and Ezekiel. If 1:9a intended to communicate Yahweh's physical presence, there would be a description of this. Thus it is likely that vs. 9a is a tactile experience, and that Jeremiah simply perceived Yahweh touching his mouth as a purely symbolic action indicating that he had been invested with the divine word. This perception was probably based on the tradition in Deut. 18:18, which in no way indicates a later date (see section X). Furthermore, the two 'visions' are not visions in the sense that Jeremiah sees something which is really not there, unlike Isaiah's experience. He simply sees two ordinary, everyday items,<sup>146</sup> and by an observation of assonance, perceives important signs from Yahweh. There is nothing in chapter one to suggest anything other than an internal process, i.e. a state of mind in which Jeremiah communicates with

<sup>141</sup>Thiel, 1973, 64ff.

<sup>142</sup>Bright, 1955, 276f; 1965, 7f; see also Rietzschel, 57.

<sup>143</sup>Lundbom, 1991, 198f, 201ff.

<sup>144</sup>Rietzschel, 133ff.

<sup>145</sup>Duhm, 1901, 4, 8f.

<sup>146</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 11.



God, which he naturally describes in terms of a dialogue. Thus no distinction between 'audition' and 'vision' should be made here. The almond rod and kettle are visual signs as opposed to visions, and it is noteworthy that Moses also received two such signs (Exod. 4:1ff). But these involved supernatural phenomena, whereas Jeremiah perceives the communication of Yahweh in a normal way. The fact that two signs are given to both Moses and Jeremiah in accounts purporting to be their respective call narratives, and both involve everyday items, strongly suggests that Jeremiah was familiar with traditions about Moses (see below). Lundbom has rightly cited the importance of "seeing" (ראה) in Jeremiah's perception of God's word as stated in 23:18 against the attempt to eliminate visual phenomena in chapter one.<sup>147</sup>

The difficulty with the assertion that if vv. 11-14 truly belonged in the call narrative, then "second time" would have to read "third time," is that the use of "third" in the relevant type of introductory phrase does not appear to be used in the Old Testament. Moreover, the point of *רָשִׁי* in 1:13 is not to designate the number of times the word of Yahweh came to Jeremiah during his call experience. It is used to designate the second of two occurrences of the same question, and the second everyday item with which a special interpretation is connected. It refers back to vs. 11, but its purpose is simply to connect the two visual signs inseparably to one another, and has no significance in relation to 1:4. Thus given the logical progression of Jeremiah receiving the divine word (1:9), being guaranteed that it would be fulfilled (vv. 11f), and an illustration of the nature of that word (vv. 13f), it is plausible that the experience in vv. 4ff occurred in rapid succession.<sup>148</sup> While they should be associated with the call experience, the perceptions in vv. 11-14 did not necessarily take place at the same moment as vv. 4-9. They may have occurred shortly afterwards,<sup>149</sup> and were linked to the tension created by that experience.<sup>150</sup>

The suggestion that vv. 11-14 should be separated from the call because the kettle symbolises the northern foe, and therefore should be placed in relation to the appearance of the Babylonians, must be

<sup>147</sup>Lundbom, 1991, 206.

<sup>148</sup>Berridge, 1970, 30, 67.

<sup>149</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 22; Volz, 1928, 8; Hyatt, 1956, 805f.

<sup>150</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 11.

addressed in light of a discussion of the significance of the northern foe in Jeremiah, which is the topic of chapter four of this study. But it can be said here that the conclusion reached in chapter four is that the identity of the foe was not originally known to Jeremiah, but was after 605, when he specifically identified the foe with Babylon. Thus the unspecified nature of the foe in 1:13f obviates a later date for this passage.

#### VIII. The Relationship of 1: 15-19 to Vv. 4-14.

It is worth briefly discussing the relationship of vv. 15-19 to vv. 4-14. Earlier, Lundbom's position that vv. 15f belong with vv. 17ff, rather than with the second vision, was discussed and adopted. The rhetorical features noted by him clearly indicate that this is the correct approach. Duhm rejects the authenticity of vs. 15 because it is apocalyptic, and vs. 16 because it connects Judah's judgement with idolatry.<sup>151</sup> While some scholars would agree with him about vs. 15 being apocalyptic, but nonetheless uphold its authenticity,<sup>152</sup> it is disputable that the verse is apocalyptic. The use of the plural ("kingdoms, clans") may simply be due to rhetorical exaggeration. The claim that vs. 16 is secondary because it holds idolatry to be responsible for Judah's judgement is puzzling. The accusations made throughout 2:1-4:4 focus on the worship of deities other than Yahweh and the worship of Yahweh in idolatrous or syncretistic ways, and Cornill has rightly noted that Hosea also associated Yahweh's rejection of His people with idolatrous worship.<sup>153</sup> While Hyatt regards vv. 15f to be Deuteronomistic,<sup>154</sup> Thiel maintains that there is very little in vs. 15 which can be so designated. But he does regard vs. 16 as thoroughly Deuteronomistic.<sup>155</sup> However, the conclusion reached in chapter two was that the *Kunstprosa* represents a style of Jeremiah's time, and was used by him. This makes it feasible to attribute 1:16 to Jeremiah. Furthermore, it is unlikely that he would have described the foe's attack against Judah and Jerusalem without explaining why this would occur. It was

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<sup>151</sup>Duhm, 1901, 12f.

<sup>152</sup>Cornill, 1905, 12.

<sup>153</sup>Ibid, 13.

<sup>154</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 808; 1984, 254.

<sup>155</sup>Thiel, 1973, 73ff.

earlier maintained that vv. 13f provide information about the "word" of 1:12, i.e. the coming of disaster for Judah. Vs. 15 specifies that this disaster comes at Yahweh's behest, and vs. 16 explains why this must happen. Thus 1:16 provides an important further definition of the prophetic word of 1:12. While vs. 15b is similar to 39:3, where the Babylonian commanders take up seats in Jerusalem's middle gate after the walls were breached, it should be noted that the wording in 1:15b describes a siege, not judgement.<sup>156</sup> 39:3 describes what happened after the siege was over, and gives the appearance of describing the Babylonian generals setting up a military regime which would govern the city until Nebuchadrezzar made his decision about its final fate.<sup>157</sup> Moreover, there is no parallel for 39:3 in 2 Kings, suggesting that the information derives from Jeremiah, and it may well be that 1:15b exerted some influence on the way 39:3 was written.

1: 17-19 has also been regarded as secondary,<sup>158</sup> and more specifically, Deuteronomistic.<sup>159</sup> However, there is very little in vv. 17ff which can be regarded as Deuteronomistic beyond the list in 1:18b. But the most which can be concluded from this is that it is a gloss within the Jeremianic text,<sup>160</sup> and its deletion certainly would not adversely affect the flow of the verses. At the same time, vv. 18f have been regarded as secondarily taken from the parallel passage in 15:20.<sup>161</sup> However this claim is tenuous, since the direction of dependence is exactly the opposite, 15: 19-21 represents Yahweh's response to Jeremiah's accusations that He has failed him. Yahweh demands that Jeremiah repent of this, and if he does, then God will renew the promise of protection made at his call. Thus 15:20 looks back to the call experience, which is made clear by the reference to Jeremiah being Yahweh's mouth. The authenticity of vv. 17ff should therefore be maintained. Stade, who excluded vv. 11-16 from the call narrative, maintained that vv. 17-19 were the original conclusion to vv. 4-9.<sup>162</sup> While the separation of the two visual signs was discussed and rejected earlier, Stade has rightly recognised that

<sup>156</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 12; McKane, 1986, 18.

<sup>157</sup>Cf. Bright, 1965, 245.

<sup>158</sup>Duhm, 1901, 13ff; Mowinckel, 1913, 20.

<sup>159</sup>Hyatt (excluding vs. 17), 1956, 809; 1984, 254; Thiel, 1973, 77f.

<sup>160</sup>Holladay, 1986, 23, 45.

<sup>161</sup>Mowinckel, 1913, 20; Hyatt, 1956, 809; 1984, 254; Thiel, 1973, 77f.

<sup>162</sup>Stade, 1903, 155f; 1906, 101, 108f. See also Bright, 1965, 8.

vv. 17ff, apart from any glosses which might be present, are inseparably linked to the overall call experience. It is in vv. 17ff that Jeremiah receives the command to get on with his prophetic task, and this should be seen as immediately following the interpretation of the two signs in vv. 11-14, which in turn occurred shortly after the experience in vv. 4-9.

#### IX. The Declaration of Celibacy in 16: 1-4 and the 627 Date.

It was noted in section II that the declaration of celibacy in 16: 1-4 has been cited as problematic for Jeremiah having begun his career in 627. The order not to marry is part of a larger unit written in prose. While this unit may be larger than 16: 1-4, it is the latter which is relevant here. The prose format has led several scholars to attribute it to Deuteronomistic redactors.<sup>163</sup> However, Mowinckel assigns it to source A, and Weippert sees in 16: 1-4 "perfect *Kunstprosa*," which contains the two key features of *parallelismus membrorum* and word groups (see chapter two), and thus a Jeremianic origin is suggested. Holladay also regards this unit as *Kunstprosa*.<sup>164</sup> Thus 16:1ff can be regarded as deriving from Jeremiah.

Holladay asserts that Jeremiah's opting for celibacy is a sign that there was no longer any hope that the people could repent, and thus only judgement lay ahead. He associates this belief with the consequences of the burning of the *Urrolle*, which he dates to 601 (LXX). Thus if Jeremiah were born in 627, he would have been in his twenties when he chose celibacy. This is regarded as preferable to Jeremiah doing this in his early forties, which would be the resulting scenario if 627 were upheld as the date at which he became active. A possible solution to this has been suggested whereby *הַיָּתִים* in 16:2 refers only to Anathoth, and it is proposed that Jeremiah earlier had been married. But this resulted in divorce because his wife had committed adultery. Thus 16:1ff refers to Jeremiah not re-marrying in Anathoth.<sup>165</sup> But clearly Holladay is right to reject this as speculation,<sup>166</sup> as there is nothing in the

<sup>163</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 945; 1984, 256; Rudolph, 1968, XVIIff.

<sup>164</sup>Mowinckel, 1913, 20; Weippert, 1973, 167f; Holladay, 1986, 467.

<sup>165</sup>Goldman, 1952, 43ff.

<sup>166</sup>Holladay, 1986, 469.

tradition which indicates that he had ever married. Nonetheless, the statement found in 16: 1-4 is in no way inappropriate to the prophet in his late thirties or early forties. It can be explained quite readily as the final expression of a celibate lifestyle which the urgency of his prophetic task had entailed. In other words, the young Jeremiah had not yet married because he was convinced of Judah's destruction if repentance did not materialise. The threat of doom naturally caused him to put off starting a family. But as time went on and a return to Yahweh became increasingly less likely, he finally felt himself called to remain celibate, and to see in it a sign for the nation. Thus 16: 1-4 looks back on Jeremiah's life, and reflects an interpretation of the celibacy which his prophetic career required up to that time. At the time of the perceptions expressed in 16:1ff, this celibacy became final.

#### X. The Influence of Deuteronomy on the Call Narrative.

In section II it was noted that another objection to 627 as the time at which Jeremiah became active is the perceived influence of Deuteronomy on the call narrative. The most significant element here would be 1:9b, where Yahweh says to Jeremiah: "Behold! I have put my words in your mouth" (וְנָתַתִּי דְבָרִי בְּפִיךָ). The wording is remarkably similar to the corresponding statement about the prophet like Moses in Deut. 18:18 (וְנָתַתִּי דְבָרִי בְּפִיו). The wording and the idea of prophetic authenticity indicates that Jer. 1:9 is based on the statement which is also found in Deut. 18:18.<sup>167</sup> Certainly influence from other parts of Deuteronomy,<sup>168</sup> as well as other traditions about Moses, are reflected in Jeremiah. It was noted earlier that the appearance of two visual phenomena involving ordinary items at the time of the call matches the pattern in Moses' call, although Jeremiah has developed this in a very different way. An explanation for Deuteronomistic influence in light of a call experience in 627, i.e. ca. five years before Deuteronomy's discovery in the temple, can take different approaches. One could attribute such material to a Deuteronomistic redactor (e.g. Thiel), or simply view it to be a later influence on Jeremiah when the *Urrolle* was

<sup>167</sup>Broughton, 42; Holladay, 1964, 160; 1981, 68f; 1983, 148; 1985, 328; 1986, 32.

<sup>168</sup>Holladay, 1966, 17ff; Lundbom, 1976, 302; 1993, 62, 77.



produced in 605, with this later influence read back into an earlier event. One could then date the material in Jeremiah showing such influence to the post-622 period. Alternatively, one could follow Holladay and Lundbom and lower the date at which Jeremiah became active. However, the conclusions reached in chapter two of this study suggest a different approach, which does without the presupposition of strict, literary dependence. It was argued that Deuteronomic traditions were in existence in Judah by the time of Hezekiah and Manasseh, and that these traditions were developing among certain groups with whom the priests of Anathoth may have been involved. Influence from these groups appeared prior to Josiah's reform in the work of Deuteronomistic historians. Thus a solid oral tradition was in existence, and the fact that Jeremiah came from a priestly family in Anathoth suggests that he was familiar with various traditions which would also appear in a codified form after 622. It was noted earlier that Jeremiah may have been familiar with traditions of Isaiah and Amos in the same way that he is frequently regarded as versed in Hosea traditions. Thus a passage such as 1:9b indicates that the young Jeremiah was aware of the tradition which underlies Deut. 18:18. Another example of this would be Jer. 3:1, which clearly parallels the provision found in Deut. 24:1ff. But the Jeremianic text shows notable variations, and this has been most plausibly explained as due to both texts being based on an older tradition.<sup>169</sup> As long as the Deuteronomy of 622 is regarded as the outcome of developing traditions, Jeremiah's familiarity with some of these traditions can be held to be due to influence from religious circles in Judah.

## XI. Conclusion.

This chapter attempted to show that the various alternatives offered to the 627 date as found in 1:2 are problematic. This date is not an editorial fiction or copyist's error, but rather derives from Jeremiah and Baruch themselves, as the discussion of 1: 1-4 and Jer. 36 suggested, and was part of the original superscription to the *Urrolle* of 605 (1:1, 2, and 5). Thus 1:2 should be understood as referring to the date of Jeremiah's call, not his birth. Moreover,

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<sup>169</sup>Martin, 90f; Hobbs, 1974, 23f.

there are no sufficient reasons to posit any substantial amount of time between the prophet's call (1: 5-10) and the visual signs which assured him that Yahweh's word would be carried out, and informed him that this prophetic word centred on the threat of judgement. It was also shown that the date in 1:2 converges with the year in which Assurbanipal died, and suggests that the change in the political situation of the ancient Near East presaged by this may have been a substantial factor in Jeremiah's initial appearance. Two of the objections which have been forwarded against the 627 date were also discussed, and shown not to be valid. However, it remains to examine the remaining objections, and to determine whether they provide sufficient reasons to question the date in 1:2.

# CHAPTER 4

## THE FOE FROM THE NORTH

### I. Introduction.

The question of the identity of the invader which appears in Jeremiah's foe from the north oracles has often been linked to the issue of the date of Jeremiah's call. Consequently, this topic will be treated in the present chapter. Since the identification of this foe as the nomadic Scythians was a very prominent presupposition among scholars who have studied the book of Jeremiah, it will first be shown that this identification is incorrect. To this end, the various features used to describe the foe in Jeremiah's oracles will be discussed. In opposition to the view that the foe was originally intended to denote the Babylonians, therefore requiring a lower call-date for Jeremiah, it will be asserted that the passages 4:30f and 13:21 indicate that the Babylonians were not originally intended as the foe, which is confirmed by the failure of the prophet to equate them with his threatened invader until 605 (25:1ff). This will then be linked to the validation of Jeremiah as a true prophet by the *Urrolle* of 605, and 20:10 will be forwarded as supporting the supposition that Jeremiah originally presented foe oracles in a setting of relative peace and security, which is therefore consistent with the 627 call-date.

## II. Prior to the Scythian Hypothesis: the Chaldeans.

The fact that the Babylonians eventually emerged as the enemy who inflicted devastation and exile upon Judah led to the exegetical view that Jeremiah intended this people as the foe from the north since the very beginning of his prophet activity. The Targumist added a reference to Nebuchadrezzar in 1:3, and then glossed various foe passages with "king," making the reader inclined to identify the foe as the Neo-Babylonians.<sup>1</sup> Many early commentators explain references to the foe as indicating the Babylonians, and while they do not specifically say that Jeremiah knew that they were the foe from the beginning, that may be what is intended.<sup>2</sup> But the prophet's failure to name the foe as the Chaldeans, combined with the tendency of critical scholarship to reject the idea of the prophet as a foreteller, lead scholars to posit that Jeremiah intended a different enemy in his earlier oracles.

## III. A New Identification: The Scythians.

### 1. Introduction.

The need to connect the foe with a clear threat at the time of Jeremiah's call prompted scholars to look for an enemy other than the Babylonians, since it was not until the reign of Jehoiakim that the latter became a threat to Judah. The answer seemed to be provided by Herodotus, who recounts the events associated with the Scythian incursion into Media, and eventually Palestine itself. The position which identifies the foe from the north with the Scythians, i.e. the Scythian hypothesis, was widely adopted.<sup>3</sup> A brief examination of the historical context is necessary.

### 2. The Historical Context: the Ancient Near East and the Scythians.

The appearance of the Scythians in the Near East followed that of the Cimmerians, a Chinese campaign against the Hiung-nu

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<sup>1</sup>1:11, 13; 4:7, 13; 5:6; 8:16. See also McKane, 1986, 21.

<sup>2</sup>See, for example, Piscator, 152, 160, 162, 165; Blayney, 9, 24, 29, 36; Henderson, 4, 28, 30, 37f, 42f, 45f, 70f.

<sup>3</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 32, 45f, 56; Duhm, 1901, 48, 51, 61; Skinner, 1948, 38-52, 231-250; Rowley, 1962/3, 198-220, 234; Cazalles, 1967, 40f.

having produced a displacement of the tribes of the Russian steppes. Sargon's defeat of the Urartians in 714 provided the Cimmerians with an entrance southward, and Sargon died in battle against them on Assyria's northern border in 705. Esarhaddon's victory over them in 679 was followed by an alliance with the Scythian king Partatua (Protothyas). The Cimmerians were driven west toward Lydia, and Gyges was saved by Assyrian aid ca. 663. This was withdrawn after Lydian involvement with Psammetichus I came to light, and in 652, the Cimmerians overran Lydia. Cimmerian involvement in the Assyrian civil war prompted Assurbanipal to negotiate with their leader Tugdamme (Lygdamis), although hostilities resumed later, lasting until Tugdamme's death.<sup>4</sup>

Events developed further in 614, when the Median king Cyaxares attacked Nineveh, but turned away in order to sack Assur, leading to a Medio-Babylonian alliance. But suddenly in 613, the Assyrians were able to take the field against Nabopolassar. According to Herodotus (I: 103), the Scythians interrupted Cyaxares during a siege of Nineveh. The dramatic reversal of Assyrian prospects in 613 is to be equated with a sudden Scythian (called the Umman-manda in the Babylonian chronicles) intervention in Media ca 614-613 (see below), leaving Nabopolassar on his own against Assyria. After the Medes and Scythians came to terms, they and the Babylonians took Nineveh in 612. The allies then attacked the Assyrian forces which had regrouped at Harran in 610. Nabopolassar subsequently withdrew to Babylon, whereas the actions of the Umman-manda remain disputed, and will be examined below.<sup>5</sup>

### 3. The Identity of the Umman-manda.

There has been some dispute whether the Umman-manda of the Babylonian chronicles are identical with the Scythians. The latter appear in Akkadian as *Ashguzai* and *Ishkuzai*.<sup>6</sup> Scholars have linked

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<sup>4</sup>Hdt. I: 15-16, Godley (ed), i; IV: 11, Godley (ed), ii; Strabo, I: 3. 21, H. L. Jones (ed); Knudtzon, 1893, 121f; S. Smith, 14; Minns, 188f; Saggs, 1984, 93-97, 109, 111; Cogan and Tadmor, 1977, 84.

<sup>5</sup>Diodorus Siculus II: 26, Oldfather (ed); Dhorme, 1924, 226ff; Wiseman, lines 24-52, 58-65, and discussion on pp. 13ff; Saggs, 1962, 138f.

<sup>6</sup>Röllig, 193.



these names with Biblical אֲשֶׁכֶּז, which some would emend to אֲשֶׁכֶּז.<sup>7</sup> The Cimmerians were called *Gi-ma-ri* in Akkadian, which some would identify with Biblical גִּמְרִי.<sup>8</sup> But some confusion exists in ancient sources between Cimmerians and Scythians. The Persians called the Scythians "Sakai" (Hdt. VII: 64), and Assurbanipal once calls Tugdamme king of the "Sakai-Ugutumki."<sup>9</sup> Although he was clearly a Cimmerian king,<sup>10</sup> confusing different nomadic groups from the same region is understandable.

The designation "Umman-manda" presents a similar problem. The Assyrians used it in relation to the Cimmerians,<sup>11</sup> but texts associated with Nabunaid and Cyrus II, use it to refer to the Medes. Furthermore, a letter from Nebuchadrezzar refers to his father's allies at Harran in 610 as Medes, whereas BM 21901 calls them Umman-manda.<sup>12</sup> Thus some have regarded the Umman-manda as either Medes, or a non-Median group distinct from the Scythians.<sup>13</sup> However, in the chronicle, the Medes are specifically called *Mad-da-a*, and the sudden appearance of the Umman-manda in 614-613 in relation to a Median attack against Nineveh which was led by Cyaxares, is remarkable. This suggests the Scythians of Hdt. I: 103, and the Bactrians of Diodorus Siculus II: 26. Furthermore, Umman-manda is used of various raiding peoples of northern origin,<sup>14</sup> and also has the derogatory meaning "barbarian."<sup>15</sup> The Umman-manda should be understood here as referring to the Scythians, and being in alliance with the Medes in 613.<sup>16</sup> Thus Herodotus is wrong to set the fall of Nineveh after Cyaxares treacherously defeated the Scythian army.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>7</sup>See, e.g. Clines, 414; and Westermann, 676, respectively.

<sup>8</sup>Dhorme, 1932, 29ff.

<sup>9</sup>Mallowan and Thompson, 88, 96, 107ff.

<sup>10</sup>Lygdamis in Strabo I: 3. 21, H. L. Jones (ed). In LB §1001, Assurbanipal refers to him as a Cimmerian. See also Cook, 30, on the Persian application of the name Sakai to Cimmerians.

<sup>11</sup>Waterman, 1930, no. 1391.

<sup>12</sup>Oppenheim, 1956, 250; 1969, 308ff, 315f; Thureau-Dangin, 198.

<sup>13</sup>See Schnabel, 316ff; and Rowley, 1962/3, 208, respectively.

<sup>14</sup>Forrer, 247ff, associates "Manda" with northern Indo-Iranians (*Arier*); Saggs, 1984, 120.

<sup>15</sup>LB §530; Oates, 132f.

<sup>16</sup>Gadd, 14 (ftn.1); Saggs, 1962, 138f.

<sup>17</sup>The fact that no discussion of Nineveh's fall appears in his work, despite the promise in I: 106, makes it impossible to discern the accurateness of his knowledge of this event. For an explanation for this omission see How and Wells, 15. Herodotus' interest is primarily in Media and Persia.

#### 4. The Scythian Hypothesis and the Date of the Scythian Incursion.

##### A. Introduction.

An important issue in linking the Scythians with Jeremiah's foe is the date of the incursion into Palestine, i.e. the Scythian hypothesis was taken up primarily because it was dated in close proximity to Jeremiah's appearance as a prophet (627), and thus provided a stronger historical impetus for the prophet's appearance than the Chaldeans, who would not enter Palestine until ca. 605. But it is precisely the most credible date for this incursion which renders the Scythian hypothesis improbable. This issue is, moreover, linked to the question of the date of the Scythian-Median conflict, and the twenty-eight years of Scythian 'domination' mentioned by Herodotus.

##### B. The Scythian-Median Conflict.

The beginning of the Scythian domination of Asia was marked by a sudden intervention during a Median attack against Nineveh, led by Cyaxares.<sup>18</sup> No date is provided, but the fact that Cyaxares is specifically mentioned indicates that it does not concern the assault led by his predecessor Phraortes, who died in 625 unsuccessfully attacking Nineveh.<sup>19</sup> BM 25127, lines 34ff, refer to a threat to Nineveh in 623, and Cavaignac proposes that this broken section of the text refers to Phraortes' failed assault.<sup>20</sup> But the date suggests Cyaxares, and Wiseman notes that the relevant text deals with hostilities between Assyria and Babylon, indicating that it was the Babylonian army which threatened Nineveh.<sup>21</sup> It is clear that the beginning of the Scythian era cannot be dated, at the earliest, before 624.<sup>22</sup> But there is only one plausible date, given the source material currently available, for the Scythian intervention at Nineveh, i.e. ca. 614-613, following the Median victory at Assur. The ability of the

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<sup>18</sup>Hdt. I: 103, Godley (ed), i.

<sup>19</sup>Hdt. I: 102, Godley (ed), i. For the date, see Cook, 4; Grene, 82 (ftn. 42).

<sup>20</sup>Cavaignac, 28f.

<sup>21</sup>Wiseman, 10.

<sup>22</sup>Pace Cornill, 1905, 83ff; G. A. Smith, 1923, 73, 110, 381f; Robinson, 1932, 413; Bright, 1981, 315.

Assyrians to campaign away from Nineveh, the absence of the Medes in 613, and the sudden appearance of the Umman-manda at this time confirms this. But this conclusion has significant consequences for the date of the Scythian invasion of Palestine.

### C. The Scythian Invasion of Palestine.

The difficulties associated with dating this event, along with certain elements of Herodotus' account, have led some to deny the historicity of the Scythian incursion into Palestine.<sup>23</sup> However, a satisfactory scenario for the invasion is indeed possible. The date 614-613 for the Scythian-Median confrontation provides the beginning of the 28 years of domination in Asia. Thus it is after this date that the Scythians made their way into Palestine. The hypothesis which identifies them with Jeremiah's foe proffers what can be called a 'high' date for the incursion into Palestine. Many commentators place it prior to Jeremiah's call (reckoned as 627 in this study).<sup>24</sup> Others prefer to date it to sometime during the years 627-622,<sup>25</sup> while some would suggest a period of time spanning both reckonings.<sup>26</sup> The problem with such dating schemes is manifest. If the Scythian incursion into Media did not occur until 614-613, the invasion of Syria-Palestine could not have happened before that date. The former was logically followed by a westward movement toward Nineveh in 612, Harran in 610, and from the latter they could eventually penetrate southward.

The above considerations have rightly induced some scholars to posit a much later date for the Scythian incursion into Syria-Palestine than the Scythian hypothesis requires. As early as 1890, Schwally noted that if Justin's reading of eight years of Scythian domination is upheld, i.e. as opposed to Herodotus' twenty-eight years, then their arrival in Palestine could not have been prior to 615.<sup>27</sup> However Justin is not right, and the date must be lowered further. Rice proposes 611,<sup>28</sup> but since the battle of Harran did not

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<sup>23</sup>Wilke, 225ff; Albertz, 1982, 22.

<sup>24</sup>Graf, 1862, 16, 321; Orelli, 1905, 8; Welch, 1928, 101f; Cazalles, 1967, 24ff.

<sup>25</sup>Eusebii Pamphili (and Jerome), Zohrabus (ed), 327; Wellhausen, 1894, 93f; 1963, 155f; Kittel, 1925, 403f (& ftns. 1f), 414, 416.

<sup>26</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, V; Eissfeldt, 1964, 468, 573; Lamparter, 65.

<sup>27</sup>Schwally, 216.

<sup>28</sup>Rice, 45.

take place until 610, this is less likely. As noted earlier, the Umman-manda were present for this battle, after which Nabopolassar returned to Babylon. Line 65 of BM 21901 relates to the actions of the Umman-manda after the battle, but contains a lacuna at the relevant place. Wiseman suggests that it read "withdrew to their country."<sup>29</sup> Hogarth has noted the discovery of Scythian objects excavated at Charchemish.<sup>30</sup> This suggests that Harran was not the Scythians last stop before leaving Syria. Malamat proposes that after the victory of the Babylonians and Umman-manda at Harran in 610, the Scythians pursued the retreating Egyptian army southward to the border of Egypt.<sup>31</sup> The difficulty with this approach is the nature of the events at Harran, where the Egyptians chose to withdraw across the Euphrates rather than fight.<sup>32</sup> It is difficult to speak of a military defeat, much less a retreat to Egypt. It is likely that the Egyptians withdrew no further than Charchemish.

This raises the question as to whether the march to Egypt did not take place under Psammetichus II. Lewy cites Ezek. 25: 12-15; 32:22ff, as indicating that the nations who attended the Jerusalem conference in 593 (Jer. 27:1ff) had really revolted, albeit without Judah's support. Being occupied elsewhere, Nebuchadrezzar sent the Scythians to punish the rebels. Thus the Scythian incursion occurred sometime in the years 593-590, and it was Psammetichus II who paid them to withdraw. In his fourth year, given as 590, the Pharaoh campaigned in Palestine in order to restore Egypt's reputation, adversely affected by the Scythian incident.<sup>33</sup>

Despite a few problems with Lewy's solution, the date 591-590 for the Scythian incursion into Syria-Palestine is feasible. This follows from historical developments in Egypt and Lydia. The dates for the reign of Psammetichus II used by Lewy have since been corrected. The dates 593-588,<sup>34</sup> and 594-588,<sup>35</sup> have been adjusted to 595-589.<sup>36</sup> Thus the expedition of Psammetichus II to

<sup>29</sup>Wiseman, 63, line 65.

<sup>30</sup>Hogarth, 147 (note).

<sup>31</sup>Malamat, 1950/1, 155ff. See also Bright, 1965, LXXXIf, XLIII (ftn. 10); 1981, 315; Thompson, 86f (and ftns. 85f).

<sup>32</sup>Wiseman, 63, lines 60-65.

<sup>33</sup>Lewy, 51ff. See also Bardtke, 237; Reventlow, 99f.

<sup>34</sup>Breasted, 585f, 601; Yoyotte, 140ff.

<sup>35</sup>Greenberg, 305 (and ft. 3); Freedy and Redford, 474.

<sup>36</sup>Parker, 208ff; Lloyd, 280f.

Palestine, which was carried out after his successful Nubian campaign (593), and intended to encourage anti-Babylonian sentiments in Judah and Palestine,<sup>37</sup> occurred in 592. It is unknown precisely when he returned to Egypt, but by that time he was ill, and died in 589. Surely Nebuchadrezzar would have taken some reprisal for this incitement, and unfortunately BM 21946 breaks off with the year 594-593.<sup>38</sup> Yet he may have sent the Scythian forces in Northern Syria to march against Egypt, suggesting that he was otherwise engaged. At any rate, no damage was done on the march<sup>39</sup> because, *pace* Lewy, no rebellion had occurred, and thus the states of Syria-Palestine were Babylonian vassals at the time. The ill Pharaoh opted to avoid battle by paying the attackers to leave.

#### D. The 28 Years of Scythian Involvement in Asia.

Events in Lydia, important in relation to the date of the Scythian incursion, also substantiate the figure of twenty-eight years given by Herodotus in relation to the Scythians. Alternative figures include eight years and twenty-two years.<sup>40</sup> Adjustments are unnecessary. It was noted earlier that Herodotus has wrongly placed the end of the twenty-eight years prior to the conquest of Nineveh. Labat has shown that Herodotus intended this period as concurrent with the reign of Cyaxares, and Vaggione has demonstrated that the Greek historian does not forward a period of domination over all of Asia, but rather over upper Asia, i.e. from the Halys river to the eastern border of Media.<sup>41</sup> However, the twenty-eight years of Herodotus should be seen as a 'Scythian era,' i.e. the period during which they influenced events in the Median region, rather than the duration of a Scythian 'empire.' Herodotus records that a group of Scythians separated from the rest, settled in Media as the king's retainers, and, after Cyaxares insulted them, took vengeance against him. They then fled to Alyattes of Lydia, and extradition was refused. A five year war resulted, which

<sup>37</sup>Redford, 463f; Spalinger, 1992, 361.

<sup>38</sup>Wiseman, 37, line 75.

<sup>39</sup>Except for a band of stragglers who sacked a temple in Ashkelon, see Hdt. I: 105.

<sup>40</sup>M. Juniani Justini, Ruehl, (ed), 19f; Schnabel, 318.

<sup>41</sup>Labat, 3ff; Vaggione, 523ff.



ended dramatically with a full solar eclipse on May 28, 585.<sup>42</sup> Assuming that the relevant band of Scythians remained in Media after Cyaxares defeated the main group (Hdt. I: 106), and noting that Strabo records that it was Scythians who finally expelled the Treran-Cimmerians from Lydia (I: 3. 21), it can be postulated that upon returning from the invasion of Syria-Palestine in 591-590, Cyaxares attacked his unwelcome allies. Those who escaped returned home through Lydia, where they assisted Alyattes in expelling the rest of the Cimmerians. The Scythians who had remained behind then fled Media, sought to join the main group, and thus went to Lydia. If the year 585 marks the end of the Scythian era, then the twenty-eight year period began approximately 613, agreeing with the position taken earlier that the Scythian incursion into Media occurred in 614-613. This provides a firm date for the invasion, negates the feasibility of the Scythian hypothesis, and upholds the twenty-eight years of Hdt I: 106.

#### E. Scythopolis.

The fact that the town Beth-shean also had the name Scythopolis,<sup>43</sup> has been cited as proof of the Scythian incursion into Palestine, with the idea forwarded that the latter name results from their having stayed there.<sup>44</sup> Graf even suggests that the Scythians crossed the Jordan at Beth-shean.<sup>45</sup> The latter is unlikely, as it is more plausible that they kept to the Mediterranean coast. It has been noted that the name Scythopolis did not appear until the Hellenistic period,<sup>46</sup> and it is difficult to believe that an occupation of the sixth century would not change the town's name until the fourth century. This rules out the Scythians having occupied Beth-shean prior to that time. Nor should the name be explained as a corrupt form of Συκοθωπολις based on the town-name Succoth,<sup>47</sup> as derived from the Gog-prophecy of Ezek. 39,<sup>48</sup> or even stemming

<sup>42</sup>Hdt. I: 73f, Godley (ed), i. For the specific date, see Diakonoff, 112, 126.

<sup>43</sup>See LXX Judg. 1:27; Jdt. 3:10, where the gloss "city of Scythians" appears.

<sup>44</sup>Pliny, *Natural History* V: 16, Rackham (ed); Solinus, *Collectanea Rerum Memorabilium* 36: 1-2, Mommsen (ed); Syncellus, 214; Kedrenus, 109A; Ewald, 1866, 748 (ftn. 2); Schürer, 135; Rowley, 1962/3, 210f.

<sup>45</sup>Graf, 1862, 16.

<sup>46</sup>Keil, 1986, 107 (note); Wilke, 229; Hyatt, 1940, 501 (note 8).

<sup>47</sup>Pace Relandus, 992f.

<sup>48</sup>Pace Keil, 1986, 107 (note).

from the occupation of some Indo-Germanic, though non-Scythian, group.<sup>49</sup> Avi-Yonah has accounted for the Hellenistic date by proposing that Ptolemy II settled cleruchs from his army at Bethshean. They were either real Scythians, or horse-backed archers in the Scythian military class within the Ptolemaic army of the third century.<sup>50</sup> This adequately explains the large non-Jewish population present in Scythopolis during Hellenistic and Roman times.<sup>51</sup>

#### IV. Features and Descriptions of the Foe.

##### 1. Introduction.

Most studies which have rejected the Scythian hypothesis have tended to focus on the aspects used to describe the foe. As noted in section III, chronology is sufficient to disprove it. Yet the various features used to describe the foe are significant as well, and therefore merit a brief treatment. This will show that several do not fit the Scythians, whereas most fit the Babylonians.

##### 2. Features Pertaining to the Foe's Provenance.

The most significant feature is the close association of the foe with the north (צָפוֹן), and is found in several texts: 1: 13-15; 4:6; 6:1, 22; 10:22; 13:20; 15:12.<sup>52</sup> Babylonia is south of Judah,<sup>53</sup> whereas the steppes of southern Russia are very much north.<sup>54</sup> This could be cited in support of the Scythian hypothesis.<sup>55</sup> However, the usual route of invasion by Mesopotamian powers was through northern Syria,<sup>56</sup> and 4: 15-16; 8:16 clearly deal with a southward progression of the invaders from Syria. This connects Babylon with the direction "north," and is supported by 46:6, 10, 20, 24, composed shortly before Egypt's defeat by the Babylonians at Charchemish in

<sup>49</sup>Pace Wilke, 229.

<sup>50</sup>Avi-Yonah, 123ff.

<sup>51</sup>2 Macc. 12: 29ff; Josephus, *Life of Josephus* 26, Thackeray (ed), i; *The Jewish War*, II: 466ff, Thackeray (ed), ii.

<sup>52</sup>Lacking in LXX. Only T has recognised that this text pertains to the foe.

<sup>53</sup>Some early commentators believed it was north, e.g. Lowth, 11.

<sup>54</sup>Cf. Homer, *Odyssey* XI: 13ff (Cimmerians), Murray (ed).

<sup>55</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 46.

<sup>56</sup>Lipinski, 1100.

605. From there, a southward progression through Palestine was possible. 25:9 further links Babylon with the north, as do 16:15; 23:8; 31:8, which use "north" to designate the location of the exiles. Ezekiel, living in Babylon, specifically declares that the forces of the latter will attack Tyre from the north (Ezek. 26:7), i.e. via northern Syria. Thus the use of "north" can be applied to Babylon.<sup>57</sup>

#### B. The Foe Comes from Far Away.

The foe is also said to come from "far away," using קִרְחָק 4:16; 5:15. The use of the expression יִרְכָּתִי-אֶרֶץ in 6:22 is comparable. The latter is not mythical or apocalyptic, since it is simply an expression for great distance. Here it should be said that while the idea of distance is clearly appropriate in relation to the Scythians,<sup>58</sup> it is also applicable to Babylon. A similar claim is made about Assyria (Isa. 5:26; 10:3), and Isa. 39:3 and Hab. 1: 6-8 confirm its applicability to Babylon. Jer. 30:10; 31:8; Zech. 6:15; Dan. 9:7 speak of the Babylonian exiles as living "far away." Thus this description is also appropriate for the Babylonians.<sup>59</sup>

### 3. Features Pertaining to Culture.

#### A. The Foe is an Ancient People.

This claim is found in 5:15, using the words עִתָּנִים ("ancient") and נִצְחִי ("continuous existence")<sup>60</sup> as parallels. The LXX lacks both clauses, but this is not original,<sup>61</sup> being due rather to haplography involving the four occurrences of נִצְחִי.<sup>62</sup> Nor is the passage dependent upon Deut. 28:49ff or Ezekiel's Gog-prophecy,<sup>63</sup> since in the latter, the enemy is never described as "ancient,"<sup>64</sup> and the direction of dependence could be from Jeremiah to Ezekiel.<sup>65</sup> Some

<sup>57</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 24; Wilke, 237.

<sup>58</sup>Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound*, 417, Smyth (ed), i; Venema, 141f.

<sup>59</sup>Graf, 1862, 18; Rudolph, 1968, 47ff.

<sup>60</sup>McKane, 1986, 124.

<sup>61</sup>Pace Duhm, 1901, 61.

<sup>62</sup>Janzen, 117.

<sup>63</sup>Pace Volz, 1928, 65.

<sup>64</sup>עִתָּנִים is used five times in Ezek. 37, but never applied to Gog.

<sup>65</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 34; Thiel, 1973, 97 (ftn. 64).

have attributed this feature to the Scythians,<sup>66</sup> but Justinus' claim about the age of the Scythian people is contradicted by Herodotus,<sup>67</sup> and Isa. 23:13, which has been cited in favour of a late date for the appearance of the Chaldeans in southern Babylonia, clearly deals with Chaldea's destruction, not its founding. While there is a technical difference between Chaldeans and Babylonians, the former viewed themselves as thoroughly Babylonian, indicated by the use of Akkadian,<sup>68</sup> and perhaps even the use of the name of Nebuchadrezzar.<sup>69</sup> The antiquity of Babylonian civilisation is well-known, and thus fits the Chaldeans better than the Scythians.<sup>70</sup> The claim that this is a mythical description which is not meant literally is tenuous,<sup>71</sup> since there is nothing in 5:15 which is incongruent with a human invader.

#### B. The Foe Speaks an Incomprehensible Language.

This feature is found in 5:15, but also in 8:17, where the snakes are not meant literally,<sup>72</sup> nor as symbolic of judgement,<sup>73</sup> but rather are symbolic of enemy soldiers.<sup>74</sup> The fact that they cannot be charmed is less descriptive of cruelty<sup>75</sup> than of the language barrier, which interferes with the ability to communicate. One cannot plead with an enemy whose speech is incomprehensible. This would of course apply to the Scythians, but it also applies to the Chaldeans. It has been noted that the Chaldeans used Akkadian,<sup>76</sup> as opposed to Aramaic,<sup>77</sup> and Dan. 1:4 depicts the Chaldean language as one which a Jew had to learn. Even if their troops spoke Aramaic, 2 Ki. 18:26 indicates that average Judahites would not understand it.

#### 4. Features Pertaining to War of General Applicability.

<sup>66</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 46; Skinner, 1948, 42.

<sup>67</sup>Justinus II: 5-6, 21, Ruehl (ed); Hdt. IV: 5, Godley (ed), ii.

<sup>68</sup>Oates, 112; Hess, 886.

<sup>69</sup>Nebuchadrezzar I was a famous Babylonian national hero, see Oates, 96f, 104f.

<sup>70</sup>Graf, 1862, 19; Bright, 1965, 42.

<sup>71</sup>Pace Cornill, 1905, 62; H. Schmidt, 214f.

<sup>72</sup>Pace Hillers, 54f; McKane, 1980, 482f.

<sup>73</sup>Pace Volz, 1928, 109f; Reventlow, 193.

<sup>74</sup>Henderson, 59; D. R. Jones, 1992, 163.

<sup>75</sup>Pace Mezudath David; Ewald, 1868, 138.

<sup>76</sup>Hess, 886; Oates, 112.

<sup>77</sup>Pace G. A. Smith, 1923, 121.

Various descriptions of the foe relate to the way in which it makes war. Some of these are ambiguous, being applicable to almost any foe. But others strongly argue against identifying the foe as Scythians. Examples of the former will be discussed first.

#### A. Cruelty.

One such feature is found in 6:23, i.e. that the foe is cruel (אֶקְרִי),<sup>78</sup> and in passages such as 5:17 and 9:20, the foe's cruelty is specifically directed at children. In 6:11, Yahweh's judgement is to be poured out on the children, and here it is natural to assume that the foe carries this out.<sup>79</sup> In 5:17, the foe devours children. Some have understood this literally, i.e. they are cannibals.<sup>80</sup> But this is to be rejected, given the metaphorical use of אָכַל elsewhere,<sup>81</sup> and the Targum dispenses with the metaphor in translation (קָטַל). In 9:20, death enters fortified Jerusalem and kills the children. Here, מָוֶת does not symbolise plague,<sup>82</sup> or death and judgement in general.<sup>83</sup> It does not have the events narrated in the Ugaritic Baal epic underlying it,<sup>84</sup> nor the Babylonian Lamashtu demon.<sup>85</sup> Death symbolises the enemy penetrating the city<sup>86</sup> and killing children in the massacre. Likewise, MT 13:14 represents the victims as including children.<sup>87</sup> Certainly the Scythians were infamous for their cruelty and barbarity.<sup>88</sup> But warfare in the ancient world tended to be cruel generally. The cruelty of the Assyrians is well known,<sup>89</sup> and other peoples are accused of barbarous acts during

<sup>78</sup>LXX mistranslates as ἰσχυρός ("bold").

<sup>79</sup>T was offended at the idea of Yahweh killing children, and consequently altered the passage.

<sup>80</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 40; Cornill, 1905, 62.

<sup>81</sup>Graf, 1862, 92.

<sup>82</sup>Pace Ball, 203; Holladay, 1986, 310, 314.

<sup>83</sup>Pace Kimchi; Peake, 1910, 168; Kelley, 150f.

<sup>84</sup>Pace Pohl, 36f; Cassuto, 1942, 51ff; 1975, 35, 134f. In the epic, Baal fears Yam, not Mot. See Driver and Gibson, 11f, 14, 62; Healy, 1130.

<sup>85</sup>Paul, 373ff.

<sup>86</sup>Henderson, 63f; Volz, 1928, 119.

<sup>87</sup>LXX and V lose the sense by reading a qal verb ("scatter") rather than a piel ("smash"). The use of the preposition אֶל with the verb supports MT (cf. Ps. 137:9), as does the use of נָכַל ("jar") in 13:12. Targum intentionally alters the passage. 21:7 shows that the foe will carry this out.

<sup>88</sup>Hdt. IV: 2, 62, 64-65, Godley (ed), ii; 2 Macc. 4:47; 3 Macc. 7:5; 4 Macc. 10:7; Josephus, *Against Apion* 2: 269, Thackeray (ed), i; Col. 3:11 (= "barbarian"); Cicero, *In Pisonem* VIII, Watts (ed).

<sup>89</sup>See Nah. 3:1ff.



war: Ammonites (Amos 1:13), Medes (Isa. 13: 16-18), and even Israelites (2 Ki. 15:16). The cruelty of the Babylonians is clear from Jer. 39: 6-7;<sup>90</sup> Jer. 21:7;<sup>91</sup> Jer 29:22 (cf. Dan. 3:6ff); Hab. 1:9; and Ps. 137:9, which implies retaliation for the same act carried out by the Babylonians. The latter clearly indicates that cruelty towards infants was perpetrated by the Babylonians. Thus this attribute is just as appropriate to the Babylonians as anyone else.<sup>92</sup>

## B. Bows and Spears.

One aspect frequently cited in support of the Scythian hypothesis is skilled bowmanship,<sup>93</sup> which is attested in various classical sources.<sup>94</sup> Bowmanship is attributed to the foe in Jer. 4:29; 5:16; 6:23. 5:16a is lacking in the Septuagint, and while some prefer to follow the latter, the sloppiness of the translator in 5:15 points rather to error. Nor should ~~inew~~ ("its quiver") be emended to read "mouth."<sup>95</sup> Yet it is clear that bowmen were a common feature of ancient Near Eastern armies generally: Babylonian (Jer. 51:56; Ezek. 21:26); Median (Isa. 13:18; Jer. 50:29; 51:11); Assyrian (Isa. 5:28); Lydian (Isa. 66:19; Jer. 46:9); Elamite (Isa. 22:6; Jer. 49:35); Arab (Isa. 21:17); and Israelite (Hos. 1:5; Amos 2:15). Thus bowmanship accords with any foe.<sup>96</sup> The same can be said about the foe's use of

<sup>90</sup>Duhm, 1901, 278, wrongly asserts that 34:3 negates the historicity of Jer. 39: 6-7. Cornill, 1905, 376f, rightly forwards Ezek. 12:13 against this. See also Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* X: 140f, and 106f, Marcus (ed) vi.

<sup>91</sup>Pace Mowinkel, 1913, 14, 24, 31, 33; Thiel, 1973, 230-234, 21: 1-7 is not to be attributed to Dtr, see Weippert, 1973, 68ff, and Holladay, 1986, 568ff, nor regarded as a secondary rewriting of 37: 3-10 (pace Duhm, 1901, 296f). See Wanke, 95ff on the question of literary dependence. The view that the two texts deal with the same event (Stade, 1892, 276ff), is wrong, cf. Giesebrecht, 1907, 117; D. R. Jones, 1992, 279. 21:7 cannot be an addition, pace McKane, 1986, 491ff, and Carroll, 1986, 408ff, since the prediction of Zedekiah's execution is clearly wrong. LXX lacks "Nebuchadrezzar," and reads first person verbs, and some have followed this: Duhm, 1901, 170; Holladay, 1986, 568. This is wrong, since LXX has suffered two instances of haplography. After ~~בְּיָד נְבוּכַדְרֶצְצַר~~ was accidentally omitted, a later copyist was confused by the third person singular verbs at the end of the verse, and, based upon 13:14, changed them to the first person.

<sup>92</sup>Nicholson, 1973, 176; Thompson, 469.

<sup>93</sup>Venema, 141f; G. A. Smith, 1923, 73.

<sup>94</sup>Hdt. IV: 46 (ἡπποτοξόται), Godley (ed), ii; Aeschylus, *The Libation-Bearers* 161, Smyth (ed), ii; *Prometheus Bound* 709f, Smyth (ed), i.

<sup>95</sup>Pace Volz, 1928, 65. Aquila, Theodotian, V, and T all witness "quiver."

<sup>96</sup>Keil, 1986, 106.

the כִּידֹן (6:23), probably some type of bladed weapon<sup>97</sup> which the Old Testament attributes also to the Medes (Jer. 50:42); Philistines (1 Sam. 17:6, 45); and Israelites (Jos. 8:18, 26).

#### C. Well-ordered Battle Line.

Many scholars have maintained that the description of the foe as maintaining a well-ordered battle line in 6:23, where his forces are said to be arrayed like a man for war,<sup>98</sup> better fits the disciplined Babylonians than the wild Scythians.<sup>99</sup> The only parallels for 6:23 are Jer. 50:42, where 6:23 is used verbatim of the Medes, and Joel 2:5, where כָּעָם appears instead of כְּאִישׁ to describe the locust-like invaders. However, there is little proof that the Scythians were undisciplined, and Hdt. I: 105 notes that the vast majority of those involved in the incursion into Palestine were orderly. Certainly Aeschylus describes them as εὖνομοι ("well-ordered.")<sup>100</sup>

#### D. Cavalry.

The close connection between horses, i.e. as cavalry troops, and the foe (4:29; 6:23; 8:16), has led many to see an indication of the Scythians here.<sup>101</sup> Herodotus describes them as ἵπποτοξόται ("mounted bowmen"), and excavations of Scythian tombs have revealed a thoroughly equestrian people.<sup>102</sup> It has been suggested that the Babylonian army did not have a cavalry corps.<sup>103</sup> However, this is tenuous, since Jer. 50:37; 51:21, and most importantly, Ezek. 26:7, 10-11 refer to Babylonian cavalry. Various passages in Assyrian and Babylonian sources also connect the Chaldeans with horses and cavalry, and the latter were known for keeping large herds of horses.<sup>104</sup> Once again it can be said that the use of

<sup>97</sup>See LXX in 6:23; 50:42; Jos. 8:18. V and T regularly translate it as "shield" (as LXX does in 1 Sam. 17:6, 45), except Job 41:21, where Vulgate has *hasta* ("spear").

<sup>98</sup>LXX misreads כְּאִישׁ as כָּעָם.

<sup>99</sup>Wilke, 244; Hyatt, 1940, 502.

<sup>100</sup>Aeschylus, fragment 111, Smyth (ed), ii; also Rice, 22.

<sup>101</sup>Hitzi, 1866, 282f; Mowinckel, 1962, 287f.

<sup>102</sup>Hdt. IV: 46, Godley (ed), ii; Rice, 71, 87f, 128.

<sup>103</sup>Duhm, *per* Cannon, 80f.

<sup>104</sup>LB §31, 258-260, 301, 320; Wiseman, 71, line 8, 75, line 6, 67-68, lines 5-6. The latter records that after their victory at Charchemish in 605, the Babylonians were able to overtake the fleeing Egyptians, suggesting pursuit by cavalry troops; see also Oates, 112.

mounted forces was common in the ancient Near East: Assyrians (Isa. 5:28); Egyptians (Jer. 46:4, 9; Isa. 31:1); Judahites (Jer. 17:25; 22:4); Medes (Jer. 51:27); and Elamites (Isa. 22: 6, 7). Therefore Jeremiah's references to cavalry forces is also consistent with the Babylonians.<sup>105</sup>

##### 5. Features Pertaining to War not Applicable to the Scythians.

It is now necessary to look at four features which describe the foe's method of waging war, and seem to indicate that the prophet did not have the Scythians in mind.

###### A. Chariots

Only one passage attributes chariots to the foe, i.e. 4:13. LXX has chariots in 6:23, but this involves a misreading of the verb יָרָבִי, as the Septuagint's rendition of the parallel passage 50:42 (=LXX 27:42) shows, where "chariots" does not appear. Furthermore the claim that 8:16 deals with chariots is tenuous,<sup>106</sup> since no terminology pertinent to chariotry is used. There is no indication that the Scythians used chariots, and their place of provenance, the steppes of southern Russia, make it unlikely that they were experienced in their use.<sup>107</sup> They did utilise wagons as sleeping and living quarters,<sup>108</sup> but the military context of 4:13 argues against seeing a reference to such wagons.<sup>109</sup> Nor is the inclusion of chariots due to a stereotyped word pair,<sup>110</sup> since "horse" appears in 6:23 and 8:16 without "chariot." Reference to Babylonian chariotry appears in Jer. 50:37; 51:21; Ezek. 23:34; 26:7, 10, and this feature should be viewed as incongruent with the Scythians.<sup>111</sup>

###### B. Siege Warfare.

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<sup>105</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 47ff.

<sup>106</sup>Pace Mowinckel, 1962, 287.

<sup>107</sup>Pace Duhm, 1901, 51.

<sup>108</sup>Aeschylus, *Prometheus Bound* 709-710, Smyth (ed), i; Horace, *Odes* III: 24. 9f, Bennett (ed).

<sup>109</sup>Pace Hitzig, 1866, 36 (*Wagen* vs. *Streitwagen*).

<sup>110</sup>Pace Cornill, 1905, 84.

<sup>111</sup>So Condamin, 1936, 65; Rietzschel, 131.

Jeremiah frequently describes the foe as implementing siege warfare against Jerusalem (1:15; 4: 16-17; 6: 3-6),<sup>112</sup> or portrays them destroying the capital, which implies the end of a successful siege operation (4:30-31; 5:10; 9:10, 20).<sup>113</sup> The question of the applicability of this feature to the Scythians is difficult. The classical sources do not specifically say that the Scythians did not conduct sieges, and it should be remembered that they were present at the siege of Nineveh in 612. Ewald has even proposed that they besieged Jerusalem.<sup>114</sup> However, Hdt. I: 106 suggests that the Scythians tended to roam and plunder. Given that a successful siege of Jerusalem would have required considerable time and skill, and that Jeremiah (32:24; 33:4), Ezekiel (17:17; 21:27; 26:8), and Habakkuk (1:10) attribute such capabilities to the Babylonians, this feature should be attributed to the latter.<sup>115</sup> One may also apply this verdict to the description of the foe destroying Judah's fortified cities generally.<sup>116</sup>

### C. Exile.

A feature which appears quite often is the threat of exile: 5:19; 6:12; 8:19; 13:17, 20, 24; 15:14; 17:4.<sup>117</sup> It was a common practice in ancient warfare to take prisoners as slaves. The Scythians took such prisoners, sacrificing every hundredth one. Prisoners-of-war may also have comprised the slaves whom the Scythians blinded and

<sup>112</sup>In 4:16, נצֹר should be read in line with Isa. 1:8, i.e. "besiegers"; *pace* LXX (συστροφῶν) and T (נִצְרֵם); cf. Symmachus (φυλακῆς); V (*custodes*). In 6:5, LXX thinks of the systematic razing of the city. In 6:6, where MT uses the standard technical terminology of siege works, LXX misrenders לָלֶכֶת as δύναμις ("force"), which ἐκχεον (= שָׁפַךְ) shows is incorrect; cf. LXX 2 Ki. 19:32.

<sup>113</sup>In 5:10, T diverts the threat from Jerusalem to Judah's cities in general; in 9:20, LXX reads אֲרָמָה for אֲרָמוֹן, which loses the otherwise specific threat against Jerusalem (9:18); read βασις with Aquila. Otherwise for 9:20, see section 4. A.

<sup>114</sup>Ewald, 1866, 747f.

<sup>115</sup>Wilke, 244f; Lamparter, 65 (ftn. 4).

<sup>116</sup>Kuntz, 338ff.

<sup>117</sup>6:12 suggests organising activity on the part of the foe. In 8:19b, the quote is not that of Jeremiah (*pace* Targum and Rashi), but rather the people lamenting (so McKane, 1986, 193, 195). מִן הַיָּמִים should not be understood as placing the scene in Judah (*pace* Bright, 1965, 62, 64), but rather as indicating exile (Orelli, 1905, 49; McKane, 1986, 193, 195). The idea of exile is lost in LXX 10:17f, resulting from the mistranslation of קָלַע as σκαλίζειν, and in 13:17, due to misreading נִשְׁבֵּר as if it were נִשְׁבֵּר. In 17: 1-4, LXX loses the piece due to haplography. V loses the idea of exile in 15:14, not having added the second person masculine direct object suffix, as in the parallel passage 17:4. T inserts a reference to exile in 4:6, 15, 29; 6:1; 8:16, and in 13:14, the piel נָסַח ("smash") was read as נָסַח ("scatter") in LXX and V.

used for milking mares.<sup>118</sup> However, the implementation of the forced movement of populations is more suggestive of the type of policy pursued by a power incorporating Judah into an administered empire, such as Assyria. This clearly does not fit the Scythians, but does accord with the policies of the Neo-Babylonian kings.<sup>119</sup>

#### D. Judah has Established Relations with the Foe.

According to 4:30f and 13:21,<sup>120</sup> Judah will have established political relations with the foe. In 4:31, this is expressed with עֲקָרִים ("lovers"), and רֹאשׁ ("leader") and אֲלָפִים ("chiefs") in 13:21. The fact that Judah's lovers now seek to kill her argues against seeing a reference to foreign gods,<sup>121</sup> in favour of political relations. The term "lover," combined with the piece 2: 33-37 (see also 2:18), argues against seeing in 4:30 simply an attempt to mollify an attacker.<sup>122</sup> The idea is that of attempting to propitiate a power with whom relations had been established. Some have therefore linked this to the Babylonians, rightly rejecting the Scythians here.<sup>123</sup> But despite the claim in Ezek. 23: 14-18, where Judah is accused of actively pursuing relations with the Babylonians, the history of Judah during the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah do not attest such self-initiated attempts at alliance with Babylon. Moreover, the idea that Jer. 4:30f or 13:21 could be linked to the Babylonians is doubtful, given Jeremiah's repeated demand for Judah's political submission to Nebuchadnezzar. What can be said is that the two passages are indicative of a relationship like that with Assyria or Egypt. The fact that Babylon did not finally fit this prediction, is indicative of a date well before that power emerged as the foe.

#### 6. Conclusions.

<sup>118</sup>Hdt. IV: 2, 62, Godley (ed), ii.

<sup>119</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 47ff; Keil, 1986, 106.

<sup>120</sup>In 13:21, LXX partly retains this sense (ἀρχή = רֹאשׁ), whereas V completely loses it, and T interprets the verse as referring to Judah's own rulers.

<sup>121</sup>Pace Ewald, 1868, 114f.

<sup>122</sup>Pace Hitzig, 1866, 40f; Duhm, 1901, 55.

<sup>123</sup>Volz, 1928, 58; Thompson, 86f.



One method of upholding the Scythian hypothesis despite the presence of features inappropriate to the Scythians, is to maintain that Jeremiah originally intended the latter, but when this threat passed, later changed the identification of the foe to the Babylonians.<sup>124</sup> However, such reasoning would be justified only if there were compelling reason to assume *a priori* that the Scythians were ever intended,<sup>125</sup> and the chronological concerns discussed in section III oppose this idea. Additionally, Jeremiah would have been thoroughly discredited,<sup>126</sup> and it is unlikely that conveniently shifting the identification of the foe at a later time would have been overlooked by his audience. It is true that he expresses frustration with the apparent lack of fulfilment of his oracles,<sup>127</sup> but this is better explained as the result of delayed fulfilment, not failure (see below). The most plausible conclusion is to reject both the Scythian hypothesis,<sup>128</sup> and the proposal that Jeremiah used Scythian features for impact, but without actually intending them.<sup>129</sup> The move away from the Scythian hypothesis has led scholars to reach different conclusions about the foe's identity.

#### V. A Different Approach: Apocalyptic-Mythological and Mythical.

One suggestion has been that Jeremiah does not envision a specific human foe as punishing Judah, but rather Yahweh's eschatological judgement of the whole world. This position has been supported in different ways, including the following observations. First, the term *qib* is often associated with mythological contexts, and therefore refers not to the direction "north," but rather to a mythological source of judgement. Second, some texts in Jeremiah envision a world catastrophe, such as the eschatological end of the world. Third, Jeremiah's foe is sometimes linked with Ezekiel's mysterious Gog.<sup>130</sup> However, while it is true that Mt. Zaphon has mythological significance particularly in

<sup>124</sup>Ewald, 1866, 745 (ftn. 1), 747 (ftn. 3); 1868, 15, 72, 78; Rowley, 1962/3, 198ff; Cazalles, 1967, 40f.

<sup>125</sup>Pace G. A. Smith, 1923, 110f, who arbitrarily posits that the name "Scythians" originally appeared in the foe oracles.

<sup>126</sup>So Cornill, 1905, 84ff.

<sup>127</sup>Rowley, 1962/3, 198ff.

<sup>128</sup>Wilke, 222ff; Hyatt, 1940, 500ff; 1966, 213f.

<sup>129</sup>Pace Nögelsbach, 1871, 72f; Rudolph, 1968, 47ff.

<sup>130</sup>Welch, 1928, 101ff; Eissfeldt, 1932, 20ff; Staerk, 9ff.

Ugaritic Baal religion,<sup>131</sup> and that various Old Testament texts seem to reflect this (e.g. Ps. 48:1ff; Isa. 14:13), Jeremiah does not connect Yahweh with the north. The fact that the prophet intends the simple direction north is clear from 4:15f; 8:16, and chapter 46. While texts such as 25:30ff do speak of a world judgement, there is no mention or description of the foe as in the foe oracles, suggesting two different views of judgement. In the foe oracles, the enemy is described in very human terms, i.e. an invading army.<sup>132</sup> As for Ezek. 38-39, there is an important difference between Gog and Jeremiah's foe, namely the former is brought against Israel specifically to be punished, not as a tool with which Yahweh punishes His people. Thus Gog represents an important stage in the shift toward the apocalyptic foe tradition.<sup>133</sup> The mythological-apocalyptic features present in the material are simply used for rhetorical exaggeration, increasing the audience's fear. But Jeremiah's premonition of an invasion of Judah by an army entering from the north at Yahweh's behest should be distinguished from mythological-apocalyptic expectations,<sup>134</sup> and Palestine's experience with historical invasions from the north obviates the need for a mythological or cultic background for the foe oracles.<sup>135</sup> Nor is the idea that the foe is based on legends prompted by the Aegean influx of ca. 1200 BC convincing,<sup>136</sup> since such a specific cause, which seems to have affected the Hittite empire, is unattested.

## VI. The Babylonians as the Foe, and a Later Call-Date for the Prophet.

Scholars have tended to discuss Jeremiah's foe in a historical context linked to political developments in the ancient Near East. Torrey proposed that the intended foe was Alexander of Macedon.<sup>137</sup> But this is based on his dating of Jer. 1-18 to the third century, an extreme view which has not found acceptance. Moreover, sources suggest good relations between Alexander and

<sup>131</sup>See Eissfeldt, 1932, in general; Clifford, 35ff.

<sup>132</sup>Reimer, 226ff.

<sup>133</sup>Childs, 187f.

<sup>134</sup>so Rudolph, 1968, 49.

<sup>135</sup>Pace Reventlow, 99ff.

<sup>136</sup>Pace Lauha, 86ff.

<sup>137</sup>Torrey, 193ff.

the Palestinian Jews, which later changed under Antiochus Epiphanes.<sup>138</sup> Likewise the proposal that the Medes<sup>139</sup> are intended is tenuous, since they were not a threat to Judah, and at the time when they became relevant, they were the junior partners of Nabopolassar.

It was noted in section IV that most of the features fit the Babylonians. It has therefore been proposed that Jeremiah originally intended Babylonians, but unlike the position discussed in section II, the date of the prophet's call is consequently lowered in order to set it at a time when the Babylonians appeared as a palpable threat. Thus, as noted in chapter three, the position that Jeremiah originally intended the Babylonians as the foe is an important aspect of theories advocating a lower call-date for Jeremiah.

## VII. The Foe as Originally Unknown and Unspecified.

### 1. Introduction.

Regarding the Babylonians as the foe from the beginning has not led all commentators to emend Jeremiah's call-date, as several have upheld the date in 1:2 and 25:3, and simply dated the foe material to a later time in Jeremiah's career.<sup>140</sup> However, the view that the foe material should be dated to a time later than the call conflicts with the fact that 1:13f indicates that Jeremiah envisioned the coming of the foe at the time of his call. In chapter three it was argued that the two visual signs in Jer. 1 should not be separated. This leaves the position discussed in section VI, i.e. a lower call-date. But there are two reasons to believe that Jeremiah did not originally intend the Babylonians as the foe.

### 2. The Significance of 4:30f; 13:21.

First, as was noted earlier (section IV. 5. D), the accusations that Judah's foe was its "lover" (4:30f), and that Judah itself had chosen it

<sup>138</sup>Arrian, *Anabasis* II: 25. 4, Brunt (ed); Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities* XI: 317ff (containing exaggerations), Marcus (ed), vi; Hyatt, 1940, 503. The LXX reading μαχαίρας Ἑλληνικῆς ("Greek sword") for מַחֲבֵרֵי בָרֶךְ in 26:16 (= MT 46:16) and 27:16 (= MT 50:16) is incorrect, *per* Duhm, 1901, 340.

<sup>139</sup>Greßmann, 1924a, 157.

<sup>140</sup>Condamin, 1936, XXII, 66f; Albertz, 1982, 34; Shreiner, 1985, 9.

as its "ruler" (13:21), are hard to reconcile with the image of Judah's relationship with Babylonia as reflected in the book of Jeremiah, where the tendency appears to have been to favour alliance with Egypt rather than with Babylon. Moreover, the prophet himself demands submission to Nebuchadrezzar, which makes it unlikely that, after making such demands, he would castigate the nation for acting in such a manner. The general development of events in Judah during the period beginning in 605 suggests a prevalent anti-Babylonian position, and the prophet was obviously comfortable with political figures whom one can assume were pro-Babylonian (e.g. Gedaliah- 39:14; 40:6). Thus 4:30f and 13:21 suggest that foe oracles had originated before the Babylonians eventually emerged as the foe, and that Judah's relationship with these invaders did not correspond to what had been anticipated earlier in 4:30f and 13:21.

### 3. The Lack of a Specific Identification for the Foe prior to 605.

A second observation to be made is that in the foe material in Jer. 1-18, the foe is never named. Passages such as 2: 16-18, 36 demonstrate that Jeremiah would name the people of whom he spoke when he was sure of its identity. But the failure to identify the foe in earlier material contrasts with the material dating to the year 605 or later, when the battle of Charchemish made it clear that Babylon was the real threat to Judah. This can be observed in 25: 1-10 (see section VII. 5), and the two oracles in chapter 46, both linked to events at Charchemish.<sup>141</sup> One may also note the tendency in the historical prose set in the reign of Jehoiakim (20:1ff; see section VIII), and especially that relating to the reign of Zedekiah, as well as the oracle against Kedar (see 49:30).<sup>142</sup> This suggests that originally the identity of the foe was not known to Jeremiah, but later, as a result of the events at Charchemish, the prophet identified this foe as Babylon.<sup>143</sup>

### 4. North vs. South and the Historical Milieu ca. 627.

<sup>141</sup>The two oracles are 46: 2-12; 13-26. In the former, 46:2 speaks of Egypt's defeat as accomplished. Thus vv. 3-12 were composed as the Egyptian army marched to the battle, and 46:2 was added during the oracle's incorporation in the first scroll. Vv. 13ff were composed in the aftermath of the battle.

<sup>142</sup>The oracle dates to 599-598, see Thompson, 726.

<sup>143</sup>Graf, 1862, 16ff; Rudolph, 1968, 49; D. R. Jones, 1992, 76, 107f.

Yet it must be said that the fact that Jeremiah does not know the identity of the foe until later does not mean that the foe's identity was irrelevant.<sup>144</sup> The connection drawn with the north is very significant in light of Judah's troublesome position between the dominant powers in Mesopotamia (north), and Egypt (south). The consequences of this position was clear during the period when Assyria and Egypt used Judah in their continual struggle with one another for control of Palestine. In short, Judah's enemy could come from the north (Mesopotamia), or the south (Egypt).<sup>145</sup> In his use of *יָדָא*, Jeremiah was committing himself to a threat from Mesopotamia, and all the features used to describe the foe are compatible with a Mesopotamian enemy (section IV). The significance of this is clear, given the situation in 627. Assyrian power over Palestine had waned, Josiah had been able to initiate a nationalistic revival in 628, and the death of Assurbanipal heralded the disintegration of the Assyrian empire. But additionally, Egyptian power had revived under Psammetichus I, who was restating Egyptian claims to dominance in Palestine. This suggests that in 627, it would appear to many in Judah that the nation's threat lay to the south, not the north, and thus Jeremiah was committing himself to a Mesopotamian threat at a time when that seemed least likely. Thus the connection between Judah's calamity and the north, despite the failure to identify the foe specifically, is important. Since many in Judah would have perceived any threat as lying in the south (i.e. Egypt), this may explain why Jeremiah's threats had been disregarded.

##### 5. 25: 1-11.

The oracle in 25:1ff is particularly important to the idea that Jeremiah did not specifically identify the foe until 605. However, chapter 25 is controversial, and the dramatic differences between LXX and MT in important passages cannot be ignored. It is generally held that chapter 25 is made up of various units, the first

<sup>144</sup>*Pace* Lauha, 72, 78, 83ff; Reventlow, 109; Reimer, 229.

<sup>145</sup>The northern foe in 8:14ff should not be understood as Egypt, *pace* Skinner, 1948, 124ff. The reference to the Pharaoh in 47:1 is a purely chronological notation, and does not interpret the northern foe as Egypt; see Bright, 1965, 311.



often regarded as vv. 1-14.<sup>146</sup> However, it has also been suggested that the unit is vv. 1-11,<sup>147</sup> and this position is adopted here, since 25:12 changes from threatening Judah and its neighbours with judgement, to threatening Babylon. Various scholars have attributed 25:1ff to the Deuteronomistic redactors,<sup>148</sup> or viewed it as a spurious composition in general.<sup>149</sup> The conclusion in chapter two of this study was that the prose sermons should be regarded as utilising a style which had appeared in Judah during the seventh century, and while 25: 1-11 has experienced editorial re-working, its general authenticity is to be upheld.<sup>150</sup>

The texts of MT and LXX are very different throughout the chapter. This is not the place for a full textual-critical analysis, as only the references to Nebuchadrezzar in MT 25: 1 and 9, and the reference to "the king of Babylon" in 25:11 are relevant. The fact that all are lacking in LXX presents a problem. One approach to this question has been to regard all the references as explanatory glosses.<sup>151</sup> But Rudolph has proposed that in the case of 25:11, the Septuagint has avoided the direct reference to the Babylonians embodied in the phrase מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל.<sup>152</sup> This latter position appears to be correct. Although the reference to Nebuchadrezzar in vv. 1 and 9, and the reference to אֶרֶץ כַּשְׂדִּים in vs. 12, represent expansions in MT,<sup>153</sup> the lack of מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל produces difficulty in vs. 12. In 25:11, LXX reads הַגּוֹיִם as the object of the verb. But when 25:12 states that Yahweh will, after the seventy years, punish "that nation," the lack of מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל in LXX 25:12 leaves "that nation" not only unidentified, but also in direct conflict with the plural τοῖς ἔθνεσιν immediately preceding in the Greek version of vs. 11. This suggests that מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל in 25:11 and עַל-מֶלֶךְ בָּבֶל in vs. 12 are authentic, and that הַגּוֹיִם in

<sup>146</sup>Volz, 1928, 250ff; Bright, 1965, 162. Contrast McKane, 1986, 618 and 623, who divides vv. 1-14 into vv. 1-7 and 8-14.

<sup>147</sup>Rietzschel, 27ff; Drinkard, 363.

<sup>148</sup>Mowinckel, 1913, 13f, 31; Nicholson, 1970, 209f.

<sup>149</sup>Duhm, 1901, 200; Carroll, 1986, 490.

<sup>150</sup>So Weiser, 1966, 216f; Holladay, 1986, 665ff.

<sup>151</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 189ff; McKane, 1986, 624ff.

<sup>152</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 160.

<sup>153</sup>The synchronism in MT 25:1 is a gloss, which is indicated by the addition in MT 25:2-תִּקְרָאוּ הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה. The latter is also lacking in LXX, and was added into MT to restate the subject after the insertion of the gloss in vs. 1. As concerns the other two cited glosses, they are part of two clauses beginning with וְאֵם יִהְיֶה, and continuing up to a vav. A third case of this appears in 25:7. All three of these clauses lack in LXX, and must be additions.

vs. 11 is the subject of וְעָבְדוּ, not the object, thereby requiring בָּבֶל אֶת-מֶלֶךְ in 25:11 as the object. This suggests that Rudolph is right to regard בָּבֶל מֶלֶךְ in 25:11 as authentic.<sup>154</sup> The two main similarities between 25:1ff and 36:1ff, i.e. the date (25:1; 36:1), and the prominent retrospective element in 25:3 and 36:2, suggests that 25:1-11 should be connected with the *Urrolle*,<sup>155</sup> and 36:29 confirms that the title מֶלֶךְ-בָּבֶל appeared in the first scroll.

#### 6. The Significance of the Events of 605 and Jeremiah's Reputation.

These considerations support the idea that it was in 605, after the battle of Charchemish, that Jeremiah specifically identified the foe as Babylon. The clear ascendancy of the latter, and the contingent appearance of a Mesopotamian threat from the north, would have had the effect of dramatically and publicly vindicating Jeremiah's earlier prophecies of the foe from the north, and therefore the presentation of that scroll represented the point at which his reputation as a true prophet was established. This was recognised by the leaders in 36:13ff, and their desire to present the scroll to Jehoiakim may have been due to that monarch's strong pro-Egyptian stance. The realisation that Jeremiah had been right from the beginning indicated to them that he should be taken seriously (cf. MT 36:25), and Jehoiakim himself recognised the threat to any plans for resisting Babylonian encroachment which lay in the message of the recently vindicated prophet. With the standing he would now have in the eyes of many in Judah, he had to be silenced. Consequently, Jehoiakim destroyed the scroll and ordered Jeremiah's arrest. The prophet's ability to avoid arrest for roughly six years<sup>156</sup> may demonstrate his newly found support.

<sup>154</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 160.

<sup>155</sup>Weiser, 1966, 216f; Holladay, 1986, 665.

<sup>156</sup>The event in chapter 35, where Jeremiah takes a group of Rechabites to the temple to test their fidelity to ancestral custom, must have occurred before Jeremiah's arrest was ordered, since his appearance in the temple would have led to his arrest. The incident may have occurred between the Babylonian victory at Charchemish, and the public reading of the *Urrolle* (so Nägelsbach, 1871, 303), which did not take place until the ninth month of Jehoiakim's fifth year (36:9). This explains the reference to Nebuchadrezzar and the Syrians (not Assyrians, as LXX) in 35:11. It also preceded the event described in 20:1ff, which led to Jeremiah's ban from the temple (36:5).

## VIII. The Significance of the Complaint in 20:10.

The event described in 20: 1-6 and the complaint found in 20:10 provide an important indication that by the time Jeremiah suffered such humiliating treatment, he had been prophesying of the foe for a long time, and indeed well before the period 609-605. This provides further support for the 627 call-date, and that Jeremiah had delivered foe oracles since that time.

However, in looking at 20: 1-6 and 20:10, a few introductory issues must be addressed. 20: 1-6 records the result of an oracle delivered at the temple, which is to be found in 19:15. The larger unit is 19:1-20:6, and few have rejected the authenticity of the entire piece.<sup>157</sup> It has been more common to remove interpolations from the perceived original narrative.<sup>158</sup> Even acknowledging the existence of such additions, the basic idea remains that Jeremiah delivered a controversial oracle at the temple which so infuriated Pashur, a ranking priestly officer who overheard the prophet's declaration, that he took harsh disciplinary action against him. Holladay plausibly attributes the original account to Baruch.<sup>159</sup> The date of the event is to be sought in Jehoiakim's reign, since Jer. 29:26f indicates that Pashur's position was occupied by another at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign. Since Jeremiah was in hiding after 604 (36:26), the incident must have occurred before then.<sup>160</sup> He had been debarred from the temple by 604 (36:5), and thus Baruch, instead of the prophet, had to present the scroll. The most plausible explanation for this is not Levitical impurity,<sup>161</sup> nor the events of 26:1ff,<sup>162</sup> where Jeremiah had been acquitted of wrongdoing, but rather the clash with Pashur in 20:1ff. This would indicate a date before the ninth month of 604, and the explicit reference to Babylon in 20:4 suggests a date after the battle of Charchemish, i.e. 605-604.<sup>163</sup>

One must also consider the issues of unit delineation in 20:7ff, and its relationship to 20: 1-6. 20: 7-9 and vs. 10 should not be

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<sup>157</sup>Duhm, 1901, 159f.

<sup>158</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 789, 966f; 1984, 257 (interpolation by D); Bright, 1965, 127ff.

<sup>159</sup>Holladay, 1986, 539.

<sup>160</sup>Pace Drinkard, 206.

<sup>161</sup>Pace Duhm, 1901, 290.

<sup>162</sup>Pace Giesebrecht, 1907, 196; Cornill, 1905, 229ff.

<sup>163</sup>So Orelli, 1905, 90; Volz, 1928, 206ff.

separated,<sup>164</sup> since both clearly deal with mockery directed at the prophet. Thus the first unit includes at least vv. 7-10.<sup>165</sup> Many have denied that 20:7ff deal with the same event as narrated in 20: 1-6.<sup>166</sup> But the problem with this assertion is that 20:7ff deal with persecution and derision linked to prophecies of destruction (20: 4-10), and uses the expression *מְגֹרֵם* (20:3, 10). These two elements suggest that the two are connected. It has been noted that the prophet's reaction in 20:7ff makes sense in light of 20:1ff, and thus the two should be regarded as dealing with the same event.<sup>167</sup> However to be more precise, 20:7ff should be seen as Jeremiah's inner conflict with Yahweh which he experienced during the time of his imprisonment (i.e. 20: 1-2), with 20:3ff representing his defiant statement to Pashur as he was released.

In 20:7ff, Jeremiah complains that his utterances were mocked (vv. 8, 10a), and that he was persecuted (vv. 10f). Pashur is an example of the latter. But 20: 1-6 says nothing about mockery. Yet it is precisely the latter which is significant here, particularly in relation to 20:10a.<sup>168</sup> The word *מְגֹרֵם* was misunderstood by LXX, the participial form of *συναθροίζεῖσθαι* suggesting *אָגַר*,<sup>169</sup> which was also read by the Targum. Only the Vulgate understood the correct meaning here: *terrorem in circuitu*, reading *מְגֹרֵם* in the sense found in Isa. 31:9, and generally applicable to other passages, especially Jer. 6:25.<sup>170</sup> It has been suggested that the expression in 20:10a is an exclamation made by Jeremiah himself, describing his situation.<sup>171</sup> However, the claim that he hears people mocking suggests that it is the latter who cry out *מְגֹרֵם*.<sup>172</sup> It is not the application of the expression to Pashur in 20:3 which is being mocked,<sup>173</sup> but rather the type of foe oracle represented by 6:22ff. In 20:8, it is such oracles of destruction, i.e. foe oracles, which are derided. The mockery is not occasioned by fear of what Jeremiah says,<sup>174</sup> but

<sup>164</sup>Pace Volz, 1928, 211; McKane, 1986, 476.

<sup>165</sup>Clines and Gunn, 394ff; D. R. Jones, 1992, 271.

<sup>166</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 151f; Bright, 1965, 134; McKane, 1986, 470.

<sup>167</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 173, 187; Keil, 1986, 315f; Whitley, 1964, 476.

<sup>168</sup>A few regard this as a gloss, e.g. Volz, 1928, 211; Carroll, 1986, 400, but it is generally accepted as authentic.

<sup>169</sup>See BHS CA.

<sup>170</sup>KB ii, 516. *מְגֹרֵם* may also mean "destruction," see Honeyman, 424ff.

<sup>171</sup>Graf, 1862, 281; Giesebrecht, 1907, 114; McKane, 1986, 477.

<sup>172</sup>Bright, 1965, 132f; Holladay, 1972, 318.

<sup>173</sup>Pace Nægelsbach, 1871, 188; Keil, 1986, 315f.

<sup>174</sup>Pace Whitley, 1964, 476.



rather the belief that it is nonsense. In the context of 19:1-20:6, the treatment received at the hands of Pashur, occasioned by a threat of destruction (19:15), so angered Jeremiah that he vented his frustration at Yahweh.

Although 20:1ff occurred in 605-604, Jeremiah is probably looking back over a long period. It is unlikely that such a popular reaction involving ridicule would have originated in the period 609-605, since this was a time not only of military defeat (Megiddo), but it was also a time during which Egypt and Babylon were battling along the Euphrates to determine who controlled Syria-Palestine. Thus it was a time of political tension, and it is less likely that mockery of his foe oracles would originate at that time, and even less likely that it would have troubled him so much. But when one reckons with the 627 call-date, a much longer period of time existed for the people to have decided that Jeremiah was a crank, and to have treated him accordingly.<sup>175</sup> Adding to this would have been the circumstances occasioned by Assyrian weakness and Josiah's national revival, when many would have come to conclude that such threats of destruction were laughable. Thus in 20:7ff, Pashur's treatment of Jeremiah provokes a reaction during which long felt frustrations were expressed, and the nature of the situation described in 20: 7-10 suggests a period of time over which to develop that is best envisioned in relation to the 627 call-date. Not long after the event in 20:1ff he would be publicly vindicated when, in the scroll presented in the temple, he officially connected his earlier oracles, which had been mocked over a long period, with the victor at Charchemish. But for the moment he overcame his frustrations, as indicated by 20:11f, and when he was released from the stocks, he defiantly turned to Pashur and specifically applied to him that quintessence of his message which had occasioned so much derision and persecution, i.e. the priest would himself would become *קֹזֵר מִסָּבִיב* (20:3). As he left the temple, his faith in Yahweh having been reinvigorated as a result of the inner process presented in 20:7ff, he could well have had the praise found in 20:13 in his mind.

## IX. Conclusions.

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<sup>175</sup>So Rowley, 1962/3, 220ff.



A few conclusions can be reached about the foe from the north theme in Jeremiah, and its relationship to the 627 call-date. The identity of the threatened invader is an important topic here, and while the standards of modern critical study do not allow for Jeremiah to predict the appearance of the Babylonians, two main considerations argue against the Scythian hypothesis. These include the most feasible date for the Scythians' incursion into Palestine, i.e. ca. 590, and the fact that among the characteristics used to describe the foe, several do not accord with what is known about the Scythians. It was also noted that the use of the name Scythopolis for Beth-shean dates to the third century, and thus does not support the Scythian hypothesis. But identifying the foe as an apocalyptic-mythological expectation, or viewing it as a vague threat based on a mythic legend is as unsatisfactory as identifying the foe as Medes or Macedonians. Two reasons were cited against the view that Jeremiah's call-date should be lowered in order to allow for an original identification of the foe as the Babylonians. First, the claim that Judah will have fraternised with its eventual destroyer in 4:30f and 13:21, which does not seem to fit Babylon, indicates a time before the latter had appeared as a palpable threat. Second, there is the observation that prior to 605, the foe remained unspecified. Thus it was concluded that Jeremiah did not know the foe's identity at the beginning, and only later, after the Babylonian victory at Charchemish in 605, did he equate the foe with Babylon. This was done in the *Urrolle* read publicly in the temple in 604, as the discussion of 25: 1-11 suggested, and it was at this point that Jeremiah's prophetic statements were publicly vindicated, with his message becoming a threat to Jehoiakim's political intentions. Finally, the event narrated in 20: 1-6, combined with the nature of the lament in 20:7ff, supports the idea that Jeremiah had spoken his foe oracles over a long period, much earlier than 609-605, and during which he was derided for their apparent lack of fulfilment. This further links the foe theme with the 627 call-date, and thus this important theme should not be used to justify emending the latter.

# CHAPTER 5

## ISAIAH AND THE REFORMS OF HEZEKIAH

### I. Introduction

As noted earlier, several scholars lower the date at which Jeremiah began his prophetic work because it is believed that he took no position on Josiah's reforms, and that he does not mention them. This matter will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter. At this point it is worth looking briefly at the analogous situation of Isaiah and Hezekiah, since this provides a historical precedent for examining Jeremiah and Josiah's reforms. But when one observes that reforms very similar to those of Josiah were implemented by Hezekiah, and therefore the reforms of the latter, not those of Josiah, were the real pioneering efforts at national reform, and that Isaiah is depicted as closely involved with Hezekiah, it is noteworthy that Isaiah neither takes a position on the reforms of the latter, nor does he explicitly mention them. Here it is noticeable that Isaiah scholars do not handle this situation in the same way as Jeremiah scholars, i.e. it is not proposed that Isaiah was not active during Hezekiah's reign. Although adjustments to the time of Isaiah's call have been proposed,<sup>1</sup> the prophet's activity in the reign of Hezekiah is universally upheld. Thus there exists a dichotomy

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<sup>1</sup>Whitley, 1959, 38ff; contrast Milgrom, 1964, 164ff.

between the study of the two prophetic books. It is worth examining this analogous situation, and determining what conclusions can be drawn from it that would be useful in examining the relationship between Jeremiah and Josiah's reforms. The discussion in this chapter will focus on the following issues: the sources of influence for Hezekiah's reforms, Isaiah's silence on the reforms, Isaiah's position on the cult, and the various issues related to the nature, chronology, and historicity of Hezekiah's reforms.

## II. The Sources of Influence for Hezekiah's Reforms.

### 1. Prophetic Influence.

Despite the silence in Isaiah in relation to Hezekiah's reforms, many scholars have proposed that the latter were prompted by prophetic teaching, and Isaiah is often forwarded as the compelling influence here.<sup>2</sup> Others see prophetic influence stemming from the message of earlier prophets such as Amos and Hosea, whose traditions were brought to Jerusalem by Samaritan refugees after 722.<sup>3</sup> It has even been suggested that Isaiah demanded, in return for his intervention in the events of 701, a promise that Hezekiah would implement reforms based on Isaiah's prophetic program.<sup>4</sup>

### 2. Priestly Influence.

Others postulate a sharp distinction between the goals of two influential parties in Jerusalem, i.e. the prophetic and priestly parties, and link Hezekiah's reforms to the latter.<sup>5</sup> Sellin suggests that there were different-minded groups of Yahwists at the court, and that which pushed forward the reform did not include Isaiah.<sup>6</sup> Haran would place the ideological background of Hezekiah's reform in the Pentateuchal document P, which he holds to be earlier than Deuteronomy, thus firmly identifying the Jerusalem priests as

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<sup>2</sup>G. A. Smith, 1888, VI; 1905, 304ff; Wellhausen, 1894, 90f; Cheyne, "Hezekiah," 1901, 2058; Bright, 1981, 296f; Bustenay, 442.

<sup>3</sup>Herbert, 180.

<sup>4</sup>Stevenson, 26.

<sup>5</sup>Winckler, 105ff; Kittel, 1925, 374f; Hentschke, 17, 124; Kaufmann, 162f.

<sup>6</sup>Sellin, 1923, 129.

the driving force of the reforms.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Albertz believes that the "supreme court" in Jerusalem, i.e. that organised much earlier by Jehoshaphat, and consisting of priests and elders, forwarded the Book of the Covenant (Exod. 20:23-23:19) as a "comprehensive reform" effecting religious, cultic, and social change under Hezekiah.<sup>8</sup>

### 3. A Combination of Prophetic and Priestly Influence.

That prophetic teaching at least contributed to the prompting of the reforms under Hezekiah seems certain. In Jer. 26, the prophet is placed on trial for threatening the temple with destruction. A group of elders came to his defence, citing the example of the prophet Micah, who had made similar threats (Mic. 3:12), yet Hezekiah had not prosecuted him. Instead he "feared Yahweh and sought His favour." The result was that God relented concerning the destruction of the temple. While this does not specifically say that Hezekiah carried out his reforms because of Micah's preaching, it is implied, and does show that Hezekiah had been sympathetic to the prophetic message. It is interesting that it is Micah, not Isaiah, who is cited as a precedent. But the reason for this may lie in the fact that Micah specifically threatened the temple with destruction, which was the matter standing before the tribunal in Jer. 26. It can be concluded that Hezekiah would also have been receptive to Isaiah's preaching. Thus one cannot exclude prophetic influence from the driving forces of the reform. But at the same time, neither should the influence of the priests be overlooked, since their control of the cult in the Jerusalem temple would have rendered the support of the priesthood indispensable for changing practices there. Thus both were contributing factors. So too were political goals, as will be discussed below (sections V. 3. C; V. 4. C).

### III. Attempts to Define Isaiah's Position on Hezekiah's Reform, and to Explain his Silence.

The idea that the activity of prophets such as Isaiah influenced and prompted the reforms, does not necessitate the prophet having

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<sup>7</sup>Haran, 141ff.

<sup>8</sup>Albertz, 1994, 183ff.

supported the way in which that influence manifested itself in the reforms. This leaves the same issue in relation to Isaiah and Hezekiah's reforms as Jeremiah and Josiah's reforms, namely the prophet's position. But here we find the same problem which some have perceived in Jeremiah, i.e. no position is taken. Some scholars simply assume that Isaiah supported the reforms.<sup>9</sup> Zimmerli, linking the religious reforms with Hezekiah's attempts to free Judah from Assyrian control, maintains that Isaiah saw Hezekiah's actions as "acts of genuine obedience to Yahweh." In his estimation, Isaiah's claim that the Assyrians were not to be feared would have strengthened the reforms. The fact that Isaiah did not appear as a "champion" of the reforms is explained as such an action not being the "office of the prophet."<sup>10</sup>

Other scholars propose that a clear distinction should be drawn between a politically motivated Hezekiah, and a religiously motivated Isaiah. Winckler and Robinson maintain that Hezekiah's reforms were purely political measures seeking only to free Judah from Assyrian control. The former describes Hezekiah as a pawn of the priestly party which craved political power, and whose principles were in absolute conflict with those of Isaiah. Robinson maintains that Isaiah was too concerned with religious ideas to note Hezekiah's political actions.<sup>11</sup> Weinfeld proffers an interesting proposal, reading 2 Ki. 18: 19-25 as a polemic expressing the hostility of Isaiah's disciples to the reforms. This group is held responsible for the lack of a "positive attitude" toward the reforms in the Isaiah tradition.<sup>12</sup>

These suggestions have problems associated with them. While there are considerations which might indicate that Isaiah would have been well-disposed toward Hezekiah's program, it is unlikely that the prophet's silence on this matter can be explained as the expression of support being beyond the limitations of the prophetic task. The reforms involved a dramatic change in the nation's religious practices and ideas, and since the prophets viewed it as their task to judge the people's fidelity to the stipulations of

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<sup>9</sup>S. R. Driver, 1893, 46f; Kittel, 1925, 376.

<sup>10</sup>Zimmerli, 1973, 207.

<sup>11</sup>Winckler, 105ff; Robinson, 1932, 392.

<sup>12</sup>Weinfeld, 1964, 207f.



Yahweh, one could rather expect that Isaiah would speak out on this issue.

The proposal offered by Winckler and Robinson is tenuous, since it makes a sharp distinction between political and religious views which is more fitting in the modern western world than the ancient Near East. There is also a manifest lack of evidence that Hezekiah's measures did not reflect a sincere concern with the state of Yahwism. The excesses of Ahaz were bound to produce a reaction of some kind, and it was noted in chapter one that the political and religious developments during the reign of Ahaz provoked intense factional strife between the strict Yahwists and the syncretists. Political and religious concerns were inseparably interconnected. Moreover, Isaiah is depicted as intervening in significant political matters (Isa. 7; 36f), and Weinfeld's view of the Rabshakeh's speech is not the one which will be taken in this study when that speech is discussed later.

Two other observations are appropriate. First, texts such as Isa. 31:1 show that Isaiah was willing to speak out against Hezekiah's policies when they conflicted with his own ideas, and thus it cannot be assumed that he would remain silent when he was opposed to a policy. But there are also reasons to question the assertion that Hezekiah's reform measures would have met with the prophet's disapproval. 2 Ki. 18: 4, 22 describe the removal of four religious elements: *במות*; *מזבחות*; *אשרות*<sup>13</sup>; *מזבחות*. Certainly in 27:9 Isaiah clearly denounces the *אשרות* (cf. Mic. 5:13), and in 1:29 he also attacks *אילים* ("trees") and *גנות* ("gardens"), which suggest elements of Canaanite religion like the *אשרות*. As concerns the *מזבחות*, Isa. 27:9 condemns the *תנאים* ("incense altars"), and 2 Chr. 30:14 adds that Hezekiah removed the *מקדשות*<sup>14</sup> ("incense altars"). *מזבחה* appears only in Isa. 19:19, where it is used positively. However, this *מזבחה* serves as a witness (*עד*) of a covenant, and is thus akin to the *מזבחה* in Gen. 31:45. While 19:19 also mentions an altar, it is interesting that the pillar is nowhere near it (cf. Deut. 16:21f). There is no reason to believe that Isaiah would have opposed the removal of *מזבחות* which represented Canaanite religion (Exod. 23:24). Isaiah does not denounce the *bamoth*, although Hosea (10:8) and Amos (7:9) did. But the basic

<sup>13</sup>Reading the plural with LXX and V.

<sup>14</sup>Or *מקדשות*, see BHS CA.

picture of these cultic sites is that the religion practised there was unable to remain free of Canaanite fertility practices, and the long history of the threat these shrines posed to orthodox Yahwism suggests that Isaiah would have supported their removal. It is worth noting that only one altar is mentioned in Isa. 19:19, which is to be understood in light of the idea that Egypt will become Yahweh's people, and this is reminiscent of the idea of cultic centralisation. It should also be noted that Isaiah's strong support for Zion theology would make him sympathetic to the removal of the *bamoth*, which competed with the Jerusalem temple for the religious devotion of the people. Finally, one may also assume that Hezekiah's reforms saw the removal of idolatry from Jerusalem,<sup>15</sup> and Judah in general can be included here once the shrines were eliminated. Isaiah would certainly have supported measures taken against idolatry.

#### IV. Isaiah and the Cult.

##### 1. Introduction.

Certainly one could maintain that Isaiah was opposed to the reforms if the prophet's cult polemic were understood to entail a rejection of the cult itself, and not merely a criticism of popular abuses and misunderstandings of it. Isa. 1: 10-17 remains one of the most important prophetic criticisms of Israel's cult. 29:13f is also relevant, although it is less specific. It has been concluded by many commentators that Isaiah's cult polemic indicates a rejection of the sacrificial cult *in toto*.<sup>16</sup>

##### 2. Isa. 1: 10-17 and Isaiah's Position on Hezekiah's Reforms.

It was noted above that if 1:10ff were understood as a rejection of the cult itself, one might see in it Isaiah's position on Hezekiah's reforms, since these predominantly involved the cult. However, the issue of date argues against this. Since the only chronological

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<sup>15</sup>Cf. 2 Chr. 29:5 and 16, and compare Ezek. 7:19f for the use of *הָאֱלֹהִים* in relation to idols.

<sup>16</sup>Duhm, 1892, 7, 187f; 1922, 175ff; Kennett, 1920, 12; Mowinckel, 1934, 224f. (Contrast 1962 24); Waterman, 1945, 297ff

indicators are to be found in 1: 5-9, unit delineation in chapter one is significant. Many have viewed Isa. 1 as a collection of separate oracles put together at a later time.<sup>17</sup> However, the reference to Sodom and Gomorrah in 1:9f suggests that the two units comprising vv. 2-9 and 10-17 belong together,<sup>18</sup> while the theme of purification indicates that vv. 18-20 belong with 2-17,<sup>19</sup> and provides a link with 1:24ff. These considerations suggest that chapter one is a single discourse.<sup>20</sup> The date of the unit is related to the description of Judah's devastation in vv. 5-9, indicating either ca. 733, or 705-701, thus a setting in Ahaz's reign,<sup>21</sup> or that of Hezekiah.<sup>22</sup> If the former were followed, 1:10ff could not be regarded as a position on Hezekiah's reforms. But a date in Hezekiah's reign is more likely because 1:10ff lacks allusion to pagan elements, suggesting a purified temple ritual.<sup>23</sup> The אֱלִים and גִּבּוֹרִים in vv. 29ff suggest private worship,<sup>24</sup> and therefore do not hinder a post-reform date. But this does not indicate that 1:10ff is a verdict on Hezekiah's reforms, since this date presupposes the events of 701, which is considerably later than the reforms (see section V), and secondly, the polemic focuses on the moral failings of the worshippers, not the cultic practices themselves. Thus there is no indication that Isaiah rejects the purified Yahweh cult itself, and consequently there is no disapproval of Hezekiah's reforms. But the question of the meaning of 1:10ff requires a brief discussion.

## 2. The Meaning of 1: 10-17.

There are three considerations which indicate that this passage does not involve a rejection of the cult itself. First, the passage includes references to Sabbaths, festivals, and prayer. It is unlikely that Isaiah would have denounced such things. 1:13 specifies that Yahweh cannot endure אָוֶן וְעִצָּרָה ("wickedness and assembly"), clearly indicating that the worshippers, although zealous about

<sup>17</sup>Marti, 1900, XX; Robertson, 231ff; Fohrer, 1966, 7.

<sup>18</sup>Herntrich, 11.

<sup>19</sup>On 1: 2-20, see Gitay, 207ff.

<sup>20</sup>Beardslee, 118ff.

<sup>21</sup>Knobel, XIIIff; Skinner, 1909, 6; Procksch, 1930, 37.

<sup>22</sup>Cheyne, 1895, xxiii; Wade, 1.

<sup>23</sup>G. A. Smith, 1888, 5ff.

<sup>24</sup>Orelli, 1904, 15.

cultic observance, are guilty of serious moral sins. The latter are enumerated in vv. 16-17 and 21ff in terms of the basic covenantal standards. The claim that insertions have been made in the oracle to convert a rejection of the cult into a rejection of a cult practised by sinners is tenuous,<sup>25</sup> as it involves a process of circular reasoning.

The second observation involves Wildberger's view that Isaiah is symbolically playing the role of a priest who must insure that the specific sacrificial regulations were carried out. If they were not, the priest declared the sacrifice unacceptable. However the sacrifice itself was not rejected, but rather the way it was carried out. In this case, sacrificial service is rejected because morality has been separated from cultic observance.<sup>26</sup>

The third issue relevant here is the fact that Isaiah had the unique experience of receiving his call in the temple (6:1ff). The proposal that the latter is a late piece dependent upon the account of Ezekiel's call is tenuous,<sup>27</sup> since it is based on arguments of literary dependence, the direction of which is just as likely to be the reverse, i.e. Isaiah has influenced Ezekiel. Nor is the suggestion that 6:1ff does not involve Isaiah's call convincing,<sup>28</sup> since nothing precludes an individual who knows his people well from perceiving from the outset that true repentance was unlikely. But in upholding the common view of 6:1ff as the prophet's call, the issue of its relevance to the question of Isaiah's view of the cult depends to some extent on whether the earthly temple is intended, or the heavenly temple. Several commentators favour the latter interpretation.<sup>29</sup> However, in 8:18 Isaiah declares that Yahweh dwells in Zion, and it seems reasonable that, if the scene were taking place in heaven, Isaiah would have specified this (cf. Ezek. 1:1). One may thus conclude that the call experience occurred in the Solomonic temple.<sup>30</sup> Although this does not lead to the conclusion that Isaiah was a cultic official,<sup>31</sup> the setting is significant, and the cultic nature of the

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<sup>25</sup>*Pace*, Marti, 1900, 9ff.

<sup>26</sup>*Wildberger*, 1972, 38.

<sup>27</sup>*Pace* Whitley, 1959, 38ff.

<sup>28</sup>*Pace* Kaplan, 251ff.

<sup>29</sup>*Nägelsbach*, 1878, 105; *W. R. Smith*, 1895, 128; *Orelli*, 1904, 30, 32.

<sup>30</sup>*G. B. Gray*, 1908, 385ff; 530ff; *Scott*, 162f, 207; *Mauchline*, 89.

<sup>31</sup>*Pace* *Scott*, 162f, 207; *Herbert*, 18.

event, which should not be explained away,<sup>32</sup> indicates that Isaiah was not opposed to the cult.<sup>33</sup>

The conclusion to be reached from the above observations is that Isaiah denounces the cultic piety of people who have failed to live up to the moral and social requirements of Yahweh's covenant.<sup>34</sup>

## V. Hezekiah's Reforms.

### 1. Introduction.

The above considerations leave one without any certain connection between Isaiah and Hezekiah's reforms, and no specific position on them. Scholars have tended to take a different approach in relation to Hezekiah's reforms than those of Josiah, questioning the historicity of the claims made about them, but not denying Isaiah's activity during Hezekiah's reign. While some have questioned the reforms attributed to Josiah, this idea was rejected in chapter one. The Deuteronomic reformation has been the cornerstone of Old Testament study, and thus the tendency is to change the date at which Jeremiah began to prophesy, rather than dismissing the claim that Josiah carried out at least some reforms. Two different positions have been taken on Hezekiah's reforms. First, the removal of the *bamoth* is regarded as unhistorical. Secondly, some who accept its historicity link it to the events of 701, placing it quite late in the prophet's life. The following aspects merit discussion: the text of 2 Ki. 18:4, the removal of the *bamoth*, the historicity of the Chronicler's account of the reforms, and chronology.

### 2. 2 Ki. 18:4.

From a textual-critical view, 2 Ki. 18:4, which along with 18:16 and 22, provide the Deuteronomistic historians' version of the reforms, presents no significant problems. LXX lacks וַיִּכְרֹם before וַיִּשְׁבֹּר. But this is not original, since one can expect that a bronze image would be destroyed by smashing rather than felling.

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<sup>32</sup>Pace Herntrich, XIII, XV, 95, 101ff, 156; Young, 250.

<sup>33</sup>Morison, 234; Fullerton, 1921, 307ff; Preß, 182f.

<sup>34</sup>Schultz, 276ff; Porteous, 1949, 400ff; Niditch, 1980, 518; Barsted, 34, 113ff.



However, LXX's plural אֲשֶׁרֹת is better than MT's singular הָאֲשֶׁרָה. But the authenticity of the verse has been challenged for two reasons. The first is the vav perfect as a means of continuing the narrative. This was discussed in chapter one, where it was concluded that the we-qatal form is not late Hebrew, nor the result of textual corruption or copyist error. Instead, it is used to denote various actions the results of which were intended to be permanent. This can also be held to be the case in 2 Ki. 18:4, and it is worth noting that several scholars caution against rejecting the historicity of this passage because of the vav-perfect.<sup>35</sup> The fact that the historicity of the statement about Nehushtan is upheld by many who would reject other actions described in 18:4 because of the vav perfect<sup>36</sup> illustrates the weakness of the objection, since the clause dealing with Nehushtan's destruction begins with the we-qatal form.

The second reason for denying the authenticity of 18:4 is the use of הָאֲשֶׁר to introduce the clause narrating the removal of the *bamoth*, which some have regarded as marking an addition.<sup>37</sup> While it is uncertain whether Montgomery is right to regard this syntax as part of the style used on ancient monuments, Provan is probably right when he explains its function in 2 Ki. 18:4 as emphatic, stressing that Hezekiah was the first to remove the *bamoth*.<sup>38</sup> The use of these two syntactical features in 2 Ki. 18:4 is thus readily explainable, and not a sign of the passage being a late addition.

### 3. The Removal of the *Bamoth*.

#### A. Introduction.

Even if there are no linguistic reasons which justify dismissing the claims of 2 Ki. 18:4, it still remains to discuss whether there are historical grounds for such a verdict. The most important aspect here is the question of the shrines, since many scholars would attribute some reform measures to Hezekiah, with only a few<sup>39</sup> maintaining that he took no actions at all. Scholars have made two

<sup>35</sup>So Kittel, 1900, 278; Robinson, 1932, 392, *pace* Stade, 1886, 171; 1889, 608; Würthwein, 1984, 411.

<sup>36</sup>Benzinger, 177; Würthwein, 411f.

<sup>37</sup>Stade, 1886, 171; Würthwein, 411.

<sup>38</sup>Montgomery, 1934, 50; Provan, 89, 116f, 154f, 172.

<sup>39</sup>Cornill, 1912, 57ff; Levin, 1984, 352ff.

observations which raise objections to the historicity of Hezekiah's removal of the *bamoth*. These include the fact that Isaiah did not demand, nor even mention, such an action, and the claim that Hezekiah's policy on the issue of the shrines anticipates the reforms of Josiah.

#### B. Isaiah and the *Bamoth*.

It was noted earlier that Isaiah does not denounce the shrines, and several scholars have suggested that this is significant for judging the historicity of 2 Ki. 18:4aα.<sup>40</sup> But all this demonstrates is that Hezekiah's decision to act against the *bamoth* stems from a source other than Isaiah, and there is no reason to believe that the latter was writing Hezekiah's reform program. Hezekiah was capable of taking actions without Isaiah's explicit prompting, as Isa. 30:1ff; and 31:1ff show. But, as noted earlier, there are two considerations which strongly suggest that Isaiah would have supported the removal of the *bamoth*. The first is Isaiah's strong belief in Zion as the place where Yahweh dwells, and the second is the impossibility of keeping the cult at those shrines free of syncretistic, heathen practises. The effect of Hezekiah's cultic centralisation would have been to place a purified Yahweh cult in Zion at the heart of the nation's religion. Thus although Isaiah does not himself denounce the *bamoth*, two features of his message, i.e. the importance of Zion and criticism of syncretistic religion, could well have contributed to the decision to rid Judah of the shrines.

#### C. Anticipation of Josiah's Reforms.

Josiah's removal of the shrines, undertaken to centralise Yahweh worship in the Jerusalem temple, is commonly viewed as a highly significant development in the history of Israelite religion. Thus many commentators have held that the claim in 2 Ki. 18:4aα is spurious, since it anticipates Josiah's reforms.<sup>41</sup> Greßmann regards the claim as questionable because it is treated too briefly in comparison with the account of Josiah's reforms. Hölscher sees it as

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<sup>40</sup>Stade, 1889, 608; Duhm, 1892, 237; Wellhausen, 1894, 90f.

<sup>41</sup>Snaith, 1954, 289f; Todd, 289ff; Herrmann, 1986b, 401.

an invention meant to serve as a foil for Manasseh's apostasy. According to McKenzie, it was invented to explain why Jerusalem survived the events of 701.<sup>42</sup>

The claim that two Judahite monarchs cannot have taken actions against the *bamoth* is tenuous. Reforms of the nation's cult were undertaken by kings before Hezekiah and Josiah,<sup>43</sup> and one must reckon with the probability that Judahite kings, like other kings, followed precedents set by their predecessors. It was argued in chapter one that the Chronicler's account of Josiah's reforms should be regarded as reliable. Thus actions against the shrines preceded the discovery of Deuteronomy, and 2 Ki. 18:4a $\alpha$  presents an appropriate explanation for this. This is to be connected with the position adopted earlier in chapters one and two, where it was maintained that Provan's dating of an edition of DtrG which culminated in Hezekiah's reign was produced early in Josiah's reign, and that the reform party, guiding the young Josiah's upbringing, used this presentation of Hezekiah in order to turn the king into a supporter of their vision. Therefore one may regard Josiah as following the example of Hezekiah.<sup>44</sup>

The relevance of Deuteronomy to the present issue is ambiguous, despite the view one takes on its origination. If it was brought to Jerusalem by Northern refugees in 722, its ideas would have been available to Hezekiah. Therefore Lowery is right to note that when a codified form of Deuteronomy was published in 622, its theology did not simply appear from nowhere. Thus some scholars see the emergence of the idea of cultic centralisation in Hezekiah's reforms, which later was codified in Deuteronomy.<sup>45</sup>

The other objections noted above are also questionable. It is true that the account of Hezekiah's reform is very brief compared to that dealing with Josiah. But this is not to be attributed to a pro-Josianic writer attempting to remove Hezekiah as a rival to Josiah.<sup>46</sup> Instead, this is to be explained by two observations. First, the writer was more interested in the events dealing with the defeat of the Assyrians in 701. Secondly, the greater interest shown in

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<sup>42</sup>Greßmann, 1924b, 330; Hölscher, 1914, 165 (fn. 1), 261; McKenzie, 1991, 102.

<sup>43</sup>Asa (1 Ki. 15:12f); Jehoshaphat (1 Ki. 22:47); Jehoash and Jehoiada (2 Ki. 11:17ff).

<sup>44</sup>Myers, 169.

<sup>45</sup>Lowery, 148; Steuernagel, 192; Cogan and Tadmor, 1988, 220.

<sup>46</sup>Pace Myers, 169; McKenzie, 1984, 173.

Josiah's reforms is due to the importance of the law book in the mind of the writer. It has been noted that 2 Ki. 18:16 indicates that the writer had more information about Hezekiah's reforms than he provides in 18:4.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, if cultic centralisation was a fiction meant to explain Jerusalem's survival in 701, one could expect the writer to have emphasised this more clearly. While it might explain Jerusalem's deliverance, it still leaves the severe devastation of Judah in general by the Assyrians, which is more conducive to being explained as a sign of Yahweh's wrath. The suggestion of Hölscher is also questionable. The logical outcome of the events of 701 explains the reaction under Manasseh. Jerusalem was saved, but the country had suffered terribly as a result of the Assyrian invasion. For many in Judah, this would be seen as the consequence of Hezekiah's policies, and if he had adhered to those of Ahaz, the invasion would not have happened. Thus the country would be ready for a reactionary, who appeared in the person of Manasseh, and this cycle of reaction and counter-reaction should be linked to Judah's internal party strife. The nature of Manasseh's reign suggests that Rowley is right to say of Hezekiah that "if no account of any reform had been given one should have been bound to assume that there was one,"<sup>48</sup> and 2 Ki. 21:3, which suggests that Manasseh's actions toward the *bamoth* represented an intentional reversal of Hezekiah's policy, confirms the validity of 18:4aα. The weakness of the proposal is illustrated by the view of Albertz, who upholds the portrayal of Hezekiah, but regards that of Manasseh to be an invention meant to serve as a foil for Josiah.<sup>49</sup> The conclusion to be reached from these considerations is that there are no historical reasons to dismiss the credibility of 2 Ki. 18:4aα, and one should also note the archaeological evidence for Hezekiah's reforms at Arad and Beersheba as forwarded by Aharoni.<sup>50</sup>

#### D. Political Considerations.

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<sup>47</sup>Rosenbaum, 34.

<sup>48</sup>Rowley, 1963, 126.

<sup>49</sup>Albertz, 1994, 335 (note 157).

<sup>50</sup>Aharoni, 1968, 2ff; 1973, 254ff; 1974a, 270f; 1974b, 2ff. But for Beersheba, contrast Yadin, 1976, 5ff.

It was noted earlier that several scholars have connected Hezekiah's reforms with the goal of ending Assyrian domination. This introduces a political dimension which some scholars have defined more precisely. Robinson and Weinfeld have noted that centralisation of the cult, which limited worship of the national god to Jerusalem, would have strengthened the people's resolve to defend Jerusalem against an Assyrian attack. Weinfeld has aptly proposed that the same desire motivated Nabunaid's order that all cultic images be brought into Babylon when Cyrus II invaded.<sup>51</sup> Oestreicher has noted that the Rabshakeh accused Hezekiah of sacrilege in order to provoke popular disaffection, which was later done by Cyrus II against Nabunaid. Thus by removing the shrines, Hezekiah may have been attempting to prevent the Assyrians from using them against him.<sup>52</sup> Undoubtedly the *bamoth* were depositories of valuable items, and by closing them down, precious materials could be transferred to Jerusalem, and thus the Assyrians could not plunder them.<sup>53</sup> Finally, since the only valid Yahweh sanctuary would be that of the king in Jerusalem, Hezekiah's own position would be bolstered.<sup>54</sup> All of these observations support the historicity of 2 Ki. 18:4a $\alpha$ , but do not lead to the conclusion that the closing of the shrines was only intended as a temporary measure.<sup>55</sup> This would only be possible if religious considerations are disregarded, and the fact that Hezekiah's measures were carried out with destruction (כָּרַח; שָׁבַר) suggests that permanency was envisioned. The best conclusion to be reached is that Hezekiah's reforms represent a combination of political and religious motives,<sup>56</sup> and that lasting reform of the cult was intended.

#### 4. The Historicity of the Chronicler's Account of Hezekiah's Reforms.

##### A. Introduction.

<sup>51</sup>Robinson, 1932, 392; Weinfeld, 1964, 202ff.

<sup>52</sup>Oestreicher, 49.

<sup>53</sup>Lowery, 151ff; Ahlström, 703.

<sup>54</sup>Bustenay, 442f; G. H. Jones, 559; Miller and Hayes, 357.

<sup>55</sup>Pace Oestreicher, 48; Handy, 1988, 115.

<sup>56</sup>Nicholson, 1963, 382ff; G. H. Jones, 560; Hobbs, 1985, 251f.



There is a significant aspect of the reforms of Hezekiah which includes both religious and political motives, and provides an important parallel for Josiah's program, i.e. restitution of the old Davidic kingdom. But for this aspect, one is dependent upon 2 Chronicles, which also includes the description of a Passover celebration, providing a further parallel with Josiah. Thus the question of the reliability of 2 Chr. 30f is raised.

#### B. The Passover Narrative in 2 Chr. 30.

The account of Hezekiah's Passover is directly relevant to the question of his relationship with Northern Israel, and a possible hope for a restoration of the Davidic kingdom. The significance is clear from the fact that Northerners were encouraged to go to Jerusalem to celebrate the festival, and that the iconoclasm and destruction of shrines which followed extended into the north as well. But several objections have been made against the reliability of 2 Chr. 30, which if valid, obviate the usefulness of the Chronicler's account. These include the charge that, because 2 Kings says nothing of the celebration, it represents an attempt to make Hezekiah's reign more parallel to that of Josiah, that 2 Chr. 30:26 contradicts 2 Ki. 23:22; 2 Chr. 35:18, and the idea that a centralised Passover presupposes Deuteronomy. For reasons such as these, several scholars have rejected the historicity of 2 Chr. 30.<sup>57</sup>

Before discussing these objections, it is worth noting that there are several elements of 2 Chr. 30 which make it unlikely that there is no historical kernel to the narrative, since they present details which violate the Passover regulations, or are simply embarrassing to Hezekiah. The inclusion of such elements is significant, since it has been noted that the Chronicler omits unflattering aspects of the account of the Assyrian invasion in 2 Kings.<sup>58</sup>

One such element is the date of the event, which took place in the second month (2 Chr. 30:2), rather than the first month. Num. 9:9ff allows for a celebration of Passover in the second month, but only if those involved meet one of two extenuating circumstances, neither of which apply to 2 Chr. 30. The latter suggests that the

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<sup>57</sup>Thenius, 379f, 433; Curtis, 462f, 470f; Galling, 1954, 159; Ahlström, 705, 707.

<sup>58</sup>Welch, 1939, 99f.

celebration was postponed in order to allow the participation of priests who had not purified themselves promptly, and people who arrived late in Jerusalem. Num. 9:9ff is therefore inapplicable, and the Chronicler does not allude to it.<sup>59</sup> Some have proposed that the postponement was due to the Northerners having a calendar in which the festivals were one month later than in Judah, and thus Hezekiah followed the northern calendar.<sup>60</sup> Haag maintains that the date represents a harmonisation with the date in 29:17, which records that the purification of the temple was not finished until the sixteenth day of the first month.<sup>61</sup> But if 29:17 is historical, there is no reason not to regard 30:2 as historical. Moreover, besides the fact that there is a lack of evidence regarding the northern calendar in Hezekiah's age,<sup>62</sup> it has been noted that the Chronicler gives the reason for the postponement, i.e. failure to prepare on time.<sup>63</sup> Thus one may conclude that if the Chronicler were inventing a Passover story, he would not have included this detail,<sup>64</sup> and it is worth noting that the Talmud criticises Hezekiah for it.<sup>65</sup>

A second element which argues against 2 Chr. 30 being an invention is found in 30:10, where Hezekiah's invitation to the Northerners is met with refusal and scorn. Eventually only a limited number of northerners participated in the festival. It has been noted that this aspect would not have been included in a fictitious story meant to glorify Hezekiah.<sup>66</sup> It is likely that this refusal may indicate fear of an Assyrian reprisal,<sup>67</sup> as well as traditional enmity toward the southern kingdom.

Finally, 30:18ff records that a large number of Northerners were ritually impure, but were allowed to participate anyway. The Chronicler was clearly bothered by this, since he depicts Hezekiah as praying for these people, and God responding positively. But the fact that Hezekiah desired northern participation enough to set

<sup>59</sup>Bennett, 1894, 437f; Lowery, 165.

<sup>60</sup>Gaster, 198ff; Talmon, 60.

<sup>61</sup>Haag, 1973, 91.

<sup>62</sup>Rost, 119.

<sup>63</sup>Moriarty, 405.

<sup>64</sup>Berthaeu, 395; Williamson, 364; Japhet, 935.

<sup>65</sup>*B. Ber.* 10b, Simon (ed); *b. Pesh.* 56a, Freedman (ed); *b. Sanh.* 12a-b, Schachter and Freedman (eds).

<sup>66</sup>Rosenbaum, 34; Lowery, 166.

<sup>67</sup>Bright, 1981, 283.

aside the proper regulations suggests that this detail would not have been invented.<sup>68</sup>

These considerations indicate that a historically valid kernel lies at the basis of the Passover narrative. But it is worth looking briefly at the objections made against 2 Chr. 30, which were enumerated earlier. While it is true that 2 Kings says nothing of Hezekiah's Passover, this may well be due to the unorthodox character of it.<sup>69</sup> It is interesting to note that DtrG also shows little interest in Josiah's Passover (2 Ki. 23:21ff). It was noted earlier that little discussion is devoted to Hezekiah's reforms in general, due to the writer being primarily concerned with the events of 701. Interestingly, some scholars have identified texts in Isaiah possibly dealing with the Passover.<sup>70</sup>

An objective comparison of 2 Chr. 30:26 with 35:18 and 2 Ki. 23:22 indicates no contradiction in the assessments of the two Passover celebrations. The latter two passages state only that there had been no Passover like Josiah's since the pre-monarchic period, which accords with the fact that Hezekiah's Passover fell short of the proper regulations. 2 Chr. 30:26 stresses that no Passover celebrations prior to that under Hezekiah had occasioned such great joy (שְׂמֵחָה גְּדוֹלָה) in Jerusalem, which alludes to the mutual participation of representatives from both kingdoms for the first time since the split between Israel and Judah. Thus there is no contradiction between the relevant passages.<sup>71</sup>

The relationship of this Passover to Deuteronomy's demand for the celebration of the festival only in Jerusalem is ambiguous, and there is no need to see 2 Chr. 30 as originally describing only a Mazzoth festival.<sup>72</sup> The fact that Hezekiah was planning to centralise the cult in Jerusalem readily explains the celebration of Passover at the temple, and Procksch maintains that the regulation in Deut. 16:1ff had already come into force in Hezekiah's reign.<sup>73</sup> But there is another important consideration here. The attempt to bring Northerners to religious ceremonies in Jerusalem has been linked with a desire on Hezekiah's part to re-establish the Davidic

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<sup>68</sup>Bertheau, 395; Myers, 178.

<sup>69</sup>Moriarty, 406.

<sup>70</sup>Knobel, 249; Procksch, 1930, 407.

<sup>71</sup>Moriarty, 406; Rudolph, 1955, 303, 305.

<sup>72</sup>Pace Haag, 1973, 87ff; Williamson, 363ff.

<sup>73</sup>Procksch, 1930, 402.

dynasty's authority over the north,<sup>74</sup> and the ideas associated with Passover, such as deliverance from foreign oppression,<sup>75</sup> would encourage nationalistic sentiments prior to a complete break with Assyria. Thus Deuteronomy's Passover regulation is not a valid objection against the historicity of 2 Chr. 30.<sup>76</sup>

### C. Hezekiah and the North.

The Chronicler's account of Hezekiah's reforms suggests that Hezekiah sought to involve himself in the affairs of Northern Israel. This is indicated by the Passover narrative, and the inclusion of some northern regions in the removal of shrines (31:1). The credibility of this scenario is supported by a few further observations. It has been noted that Manasseh's wife was from the north,<sup>77</sup> and that the very name Manasseh, which distinguishes itself from the usual use of the divine name as a component of personal names among Davidic kings, is that of an important northern tribe.<sup>78</sup> Finally, Rosenbaum notes the discovery of *lmlk* jar stamps, also found at Lachish in Judah, at northern sites, providing further proof of Hezekiah's involvement in the north.<sup>79</sup> These considerations, when combined with 2 Chr. 30; 31:1, clearly show that Hezekiah included Northern Israel in his policies, providing a further parallel with the reign of Josiah, and indicating that Hezekiah may have sought to re-establish Jerusalem's authority over the north.

### 5. The Chronology of Hezekiah's Reforms.

The issue of the date and chronology of Hezekiah's reforms is also significant, since, as noted in Section V. 1, some scholars would date Hezekiah's reforms to ca. 701. If this were the case, then the reforms would have come at a time quite late in Isaiah's life, and this could be proffered as a reason for the lack of any mention of

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<sup>74</sup>Nicholson, 1963, 382ff; Miller and Hayes, 357.

<sup>75</sup>Elmslie, 524.

<sup>76</sup>Moriarty, 406; Rudolph, 1955, 303, 305.

<sup>77</sup>Bright, 1981, 283.

<sup>78</sup>Bustenay, 444; Miller and Hayes, 357.

<sup>79</sup>Rosenbaum, 29ff.

the reforms in the book of Isaiah. However, the following discussion will argue that the reforms of Hezekiah occurred in two stages, one which began at the time of Hezekiah's accession, and the second which commenced ca. 705. Thus the most plausible chronology for Hezekiah's reforms eliminates the idea that a late date for the reforms could explain Isaiah's apparent failure to refer to them.

Before the date of Hezekiah's reforms can be discussed, it is necessary first to take a position on the correct dates for Hezekiah's reign, one of the most difficult chronological problems in 2 Kings. 2 Ki. 18:9f equate his sixth year with the fall of Samaria (ca. 722), indicating an accession in ca. 727. Since he reigned twenty-nine years, a rough calculation of his reign would be 727-698. This produces a problem with 18:13, which synchronises Sennacherib's invasion (ca. 701) with Hezekiah's fourteenth year, thereby creating an error of roughly thirteen years. One solution to the problem is to date Hezekiah's accession to ca. 714,<sup>80</sup> but any sizeable adjustment of Hezekiah's reign requires adjustments of the subsequent reigns, and thus 727/726 is an immovable date.<sup>81</sup> Rather than viewing the date in 18:13 as a corruption of "twenty-fourth year,"<sup>82</sup> another solution suggests itself. 2 Chr. 32:1 lacks the date, and Hezekiah's fourteenth year is clearly most important to the account of Hezekiah's illness, where it is necessary. Thus the embassy of Marduk-apla-iddina II dates to ca. 714, when he was reigning in Babylon (721-710).<sup>83</sup> This suggests that at one stage, the account of Hezekiah's illness was separate from that of Sennacherib's invasion, and a redactor linked the two by placing the former directly after the latter, and adding 2 Ki. 20:6. This was reflected in the Chronicler's version of Kings. But a subsequent redactor, working after the *Vorlage* of Kings available to the Chronicler was fixed, added "fourteenth year" in 18:13, having calculated it from 20:6. Thus originally there was no connection between Hezekiah's illness and Sennacherib's invasion, and the date in 18:13 should be disregarded. But the date in 2 Chr. 29:3 is also important here.

<sup>80</sup>So Myers, 170; Rosenbaum, 38. Cf. Shanda, 242, who proffers 721.

<sup>81</sup>Rowley, 1963, 113ff; Miller and Hayes, 350f.

<sup>82</sup>Rowley, 1963, 113ff.

<sup>83</sup>Dates *per* Oates, 201.



2 Chr. 29:3 dates the beginning of Hezekiah's reforms, i.e. the purification of the temple, to the first month of his first year. 2 Kings lacks this, and it has been suggested that the date is fictitious,<sup>84</sup> meant to increase Hezekiah's piety. Others would uphold that Hezekiah took this action at the beginning of his reign, but only if the accession date is lowered.<sup>85</sup> However, Tiglath-Pileser III, Judah's overlord, died in Tebetu 727,<sup>86</sup> and Isa. 14:28ff suggest that Ahaz died the same year.<sup>87</sup> Thus if Hezekiah began his reforms upon taking the throne, he would have done so at the time when vassals commonly revolted, i.e. upon the overlord's death. Tebetu is the tenth month of the Nisan-Nisan year, by which the dates in 2 Chr. 29ff are calculated, and it was probably under Ahaz that the Nisan-Nisan year was adopted. Ahaz may have died not long before Nisan 726, making Hezekiah's first regnal year Nisan 726-Nisan 725. Hezekiah's decision to revolt may have been encouraged by the rebellion in Syria, Phoenicia, and Samaria (727-726).<sup>88</sup> Since Hezekiah's reign represents a pro-Yahwistic reaction to Ahaz's syncretism, Ahlström is right to note that Hezekiah would have wished to repudiate his father's policies as soon as possible.<sup>89</sup> Of course Judah was again an Assyrian vassal prior to 701. Sargon II claims that he had subdued Judah,<sup>90</sup> but without providing a date. He does say that when he moved against a revolt in Ashdod (711-710), Judah was his vassal at the time.<sup>91</sup> Thus Judah had re-submitted to Assyria in the period 721-711, and because no specific campaign against him is recorded, he may have accepted vassalage when Sargon II put down a revolt involving Samaria in 720-719,<sup>92</sup> after which he could have attacked Judah. Thus Hezekiah was not yet prepared for war at that time.

<sup>84</sup>Curtis, 462f; Bach, 367; Cogan and Tadmor, 1988, 220.

<sup>85</sup>Shanda, 242; Moriarity, 403f.

<sup>86</sup>Grayson, 72. For the year, see Saggs, 1984, 85, 92.

<sup>87</sup>The chronological implications of this verse have been widely discussed. But the interpretation of the oracle is clear: Tiglath-Pileser III is the rod which struck Philistia, and the "fiery flying serpent" turned out to be Sargon II. It is clear from 14:31 that Isaiah speaks of Assyrian rulers, since he mentions smoke coming from the north.

<sup>88</sup>Katzenstein, 225ff.

<sup>89</sup>Ahlström, 702.

<sup>90</sup>LB §137; Oppenheim, 1969, 287.

<sup>91</sup>Oppenheim, 1969, 287.

<sup>92</sup>For the revolt in Sargon's second year, see LB §5, §137.

This leaves the date of the Passover and removal of the *bamoth*. At first glance, the dates found in 2 Chr. 30:2 and 31:7, i.e. the second, third, and seventh months, would seem to be dependent upon that in 29:3. But the removal of the shrines cannot have taken place until after 722.<sup>93</sup> This is clear from the fact that the inclusion of northern areas in the reforms and the details of the Passover narrative presuppose that there was no Israelite king. Moreover, 30:9 specifically refers to the exile of the Northerners. Thus cultic centralisation cannot have occurred until after 722. For this reason, Keil rightly suggests that the dates in 30:2ff are not dependent upon 29:3.<sup>94</sup> Japheth has aptly noted that the most apparent explanation for the delayed Passover is the amount of time taken to purify the temple. But the Chronicler does not make this connection, and thus Japheth proposes that the account of the Passover was originally separate from the purification of the temple, and that the Chronicler has simply positioned the two narratives beside one another.<sup>95</sup> Thus the Chronicler's source lacked the year in which the Passover took place, and the reference to the "second month" only gives the appearance of being dependent upon 29:3. But the date in 31:7 is dependent upon 30:2, indicated by the inclusion of Northern Israel (31:1), and the delivery of tithes to the Jerusalem temple presupposes the closing of the *bamoth*. Clearly the extent of northern territory which participated in the reforms was limited, but that it occurred should not be doubted, since, as Weinfeld notes, the continued existence of cult centres like Bethel would have hindered the expansion of Hezekiah's authority.<sup>96</sup> Given that Northern Israel was an Assyrian province, it is plausible that the Passover and cultic centralisation marked the point at which Hezekiah was again ready to challenge Assyria, and that this should be linked with the time of Sargon's death in ca. 705. Several commentators would place the removal of the shrines in relation to Sennacherib's campaign in 701,<sup>97</sup> or maintain that there were two stages of centralisation, one before and one after 701,<sup>98</sup> thus linking the destruction of the outlying shrines with the devastation

<sup>93</sup>Farrar, 722; Elmslie, 524; Japheth, 935f, *pace* Bertheau, 396f.

<sup>94</sup>Keil, 1872, 456ff.

<sup>95</sup>Japheth, 940.

<sup>96</sup>Weinfeld, 1964, 206.

<sup>97</sup>Skinner, 1904, 383; Fullerton, 1905, 637.

<sup>98</sup>W. R. Smith, 1895, 362; Nicholson, 1963, 385ff.

wreaked by the Assyrians. Two observations can be made against this position. The first concerns an important aspect of cultic centralisation already discussed, i.e. the measure was motivated by factors relating to religion, Hezekiah's political goals, and preparation for the inevitable Assyrian invasion. Thus it does not require the scenario of 701 to have produced it. The second point involves the statement in 2 Ki. 18:22, set within the context of the Rabshakeh's speech, and which confirms that the *bamoth* had been closed before the Assyrian army arrived.

In 18:17ff, the Rabshakeh seeks to undermine popular support for Hezekiah by personally delivering a threatening message to Hezekiah's advisors. As he yells aloud outside the walls of Jerusalem, a crowd gathers to witness the event, which the Rabshakeh attempts to exploit to his advantage. In 18:22, he accuses Hezekiah of sacrilege, charging that he had offended Yahweh by removing His shrines. Although one must admit that the current form of the speech derives from the Deuteronomistic historians, there is no reason to doubt that it contains the basic features of the actual speech. The historicity of the events is supported by the remarkable parallel involving Assyrian officials outside the city of Babylon.<sup>99</sup> The fact that Hezekiah probably faced considerable hostility from those dwelling outside Jerusalem because of the terrible destruction the outlying areas suffered in 701, supports the idea that he would have played up the one success he could claim, i.e. the Assyrian failure to take the capital. Many would have remembered the speech of the Rabshakeh, and thus the latter would have provided valuable propaganda. The fact that the royal scribe was present during the speech supports the idea that it was written up soon after 701, and used to bolster Hezekiah's reputation. Although it has been suggested that 18:22 is an insertion in an earlier version of the speech,<sup>100</sup> this conclusion is tenuous. It is important to note that the claim that Hezekiah was guilty of sacrilege, and that the invading king was personally summoned by the defending nation's national god to punish this, is the same propaganda which Cyrus II will later use against Nabunaid of Babylon. Intelligence available to the Assyrians after

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<sup>99</sup>Saggs, 1984, 91.

<sup>100</sup>Wildberger, 1982, 1400f; Würthwein, 421 (ftn. 19); Ben-Zvi, 79ff.

over-running most of Judah would have informed them of Hezekiah's centralisation, as well as the opposition to this among many Judahites. That Hezekiah's policies were not popular with everyone is clear from 2 Ki. 18:26, where Hezekiah's officials ask the Rabshakeh to speak in Aramaic, so that the growing crowd would not understand. This suggests that many in Judah would have been receptive to the Assyrian's claim that the destruction of the *bamoth* was sacrilege. Therefore there is no reason to doubt that the Rabshakeh used Hezekiah's centralisation of the cult in his speech in order to demoralise Jerusalem's defenders,<sup>101</sup> and this further supports the idea that the *bamoth* were removed before the Assyrians arrived. The death of Sargon II in 705 marks the latest time by which cultic centralisation had taken place, although it is quite possible that it took place even earlier,<sup>102</sup> and that the Assyrians were unable to confront the revolt until later.

The conclusion to be drawn from this discussion is that Hezekiah's reforms occurred in two stages, the first of which began upon his accession in 726/725, and represented a rejection of the policy of Assyrian vassalage followed by his father Ahaz. However, Sargon II was able to force Hezekiah to re-submit to Assyrian domination during the period 721-711. Upon the death of Sargon II in 705, Hezekiah again broke the link with the Assyrians. In the second stage of his reforms, he implemented his desire to consolidate all authority and control in Jerusalem by eliminating the *bamoth*, which competed with the royal establishment in Zion.

## VI. The Destruction of Nehushtan.

Before outlining the final conclusions which can be drawn from the observations made in this chapter, there is one other aspect of Hezekiah's reforms relevant to the discussion. This concerns the destruction of the image of the bronze saraph called Nehushtan (2 Ki. 18:4). This is the one measure unique to Hezekiah's reforms, whereas the public presentation of Deuteronomy is the unique aspect of Josiah's reforms. This provides a useful point of comparison, since with the two features unique to the two reforms

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<sup>101</sup>Shanda, 242; Bright, 1981, 28; Hobbs, 1985, 257.

<sup>102</sup>Shanda, 242; Cogan and Tadmor, 1988, 219f.



respectively, it is actually the case that Jeremiah not only refers to, but actually takes a position on, that measure unique to Josiah's reform, i.e. the publication of Deuteronomy, but Isaiah does not refer to the removal of Nehushtan. Although Nehushtan was just one graven image destroyed in Hezekiah's iconoclasm, there is a good reason to expect Isaiah to have mentioned this, not simply because it was a unique event, but rather because this bronze saraph seems to have played an important role in Isaiah's call vision.

Nehushtan has fascinated scholars for centuries, and a multiplicity of explanations for what this image represented has been offered. 2 Ki. 18:4 does not specifically say that Nehushtan was a seraph (שָׂרָף), only that it was a נֶחֱשֶׁת הַנְּחֻשָׁת. However, it is said to have been made by Moses, and thus without doubt, the story in Num. 21: 5-9 serves as the basis. In the latter, Yahweh sends seraph snakes (הַנְּחֻשִׁים הַשָּׂרָפִים) to punish the Israelites. But Moses prays for the people, and Yahweh instructs him to make a bronze saraph and to put it on a pole. Anyone bitten by a real saraph need only look upon the image, and he would be healed. This image is somewhat reminiscent of the *caduceus* of Hermes and Asclepius, although the latter involves two snakes, whereas Num. 21:5ff and 2 Ki. 18:4 speak of a single snake.<sup>103</sup> Nonetheless, the circumstances of the story in Numbers argue against rationalising the seraph as an internal parasite,<sup>104</sup> and it should be noted that Esarhaddon records that on his expedition against Egypt, he encountered what he called two-headed snakes as he passed through Arabia.<sup>105</sup>

Scholars have sought to explain Nehushtan differently. One group would associate it with an Israelite background. W. R. Smith suggests that it represented the "animal deity" of the Davidic dynasty, with David belonging to the "serpent tribe."<sup>106</sup> Kennett regards it as an image of Yahweh which replaced an earlier live snake, and that the ark was built to house it, not the sacred tablets.<sup>107</sup> Others propose that Nehushtan was really the famous

<sup>103</sup>Frothingham, 175ff.

<sup>104</sup>Hirsch, 337ff.

<sup>105</sup>LB §558.

<sup>106</sup>W. R. Smith, 1880, 75ff.

<sup>107</sup>Kennett, 1908, 791f.



staff of Moses, which turned into a snake before Pharaoh.<sup>108</sup>

Robinson sees in it a Yahweh-oriented snake cult.<sup>109</sup>

Another approach involves connecting Nehushtan with foreign cults, and it should be noted that cultic snake images have turned up at excavations at various Palestinian sites.<sup>110</sup> Cheyne maintains that the word Nehushtan is the replacement for an original נִיחָן, which represented Babylonian Tiamat.<sup>111</sup> Würthwein proposes that it was of Assyrian origin.<sup>112</sup> Others connect Nehushtan with Canaanite religion. Kittel sees Nehushtan as the remnant of an actual Canaanite snake cult.<sup>113</sup> Obbink connects it with the Baal cult, and Rowley suggests that it was part of a Jebusite cult under the leadership of Zadok, which was accepted by David in order to appease the indigenous population of Jerusalem after its conquest. The ark and Nehushtan were then kept together in Zadok's sanctuary, and both were later transferred into the temple.<sup>114</sup> Gray at one time associated Nehushtan with a Canaanite healing-deity named Horon.<sup>115</sup>

It is also to be noted that the seraph plays a prominent role in Isaiah's call-vision, and here scholars tend to follow a different approach to explaining the seraph than with Nehushtan. The Talmudic text *b. Ber. 4b* teaches that the saraph who cleansed Isaiah was Michael, thereby identifying the seraphim as angels. A popular approach regards them as symbolic of lightning, and Day connects this with the Canannite mythological conception of lightning and thunder associated with Baal.<sup>116</sup> However, it is far more likely that the seraphim of Isa. 6 are parallels to the saraph of Num. 21: 5-9. Joines has shown the close parallel between the seraphim and the Egyptian Uraeus symbol, an erect, winged cobra associated with divine and human royalty. The Uraeus protected Pharaoh, and could breathe fire, suggesting a possible source for the use of the Hebrew root שָׂרַף ("to burn").<sup>117</sup> Marti cites an instance

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<sup>108</sup>Gressmann, 1913, 454ff.

<sup>109</sup>Robinson, 1932, 109, 393 (ftn. 1).

<sup>110</sup>Joines, 1968, 245f.

<sup>111</sup>Cheyne, "Nehushtan," 1902, 3387f.

<sup>112</sup>Würthwein, 412.

<sup>113</sup>Kittel, 1900, 278f.

<sup>114</sup>Obbink, 273; Rowley, 1939, 113ff; 1963, 128.

<sup>115</sup>J. Gray, 1949, 32.

<sup>116</sup>Procksch, 1930, 54; J. Day, 143ff.

<sup>117</sup>Joines, 1967, 410ff.

where a saraph functions as a guardian figure in an Egyptian grave, and concludes that in Isa. 6:1ff, the seraphim are guardians of the temple threshold.<sup>118</sup> The Egyptian connection is further supported by the observation that the healing aspect of Moses' saraph is paralleled in Egyptian sympathetic magic, but not in that of Palestine or Mesopotamia.<sup>119</sup>

The significant issue here is the relationship between Isaiah's seraphim and Nehushtan. Some scholars have denied that Nehushtan and the image described in Num. 21:5ff should be equated.<sup>120</sup> But, as Gressmann notes there is no reason to challenge the claim in 2 Ki. 18:4 that it was of Mosaic origin. When he suggests that its survival over the ages was due to its Mosaic origin,<sup>121</sup> it can be added that religious relics have a tendency to endure tenaciously, as the long history of the ark shows. It is true that it is not mentioned between the time of Moses and Hezekiah, but there must have been many such cultic items of which we are not informed. The Egyptian origin of the image provides an explanation for Moses' use of it, and thus the basic historicity of the account in Num. 21:5ff need not be questioned, and the view that Num. 21:8f is an insertion into the old story made by adherents of Nehushtan worship in an attempt to defend it,<sup>122</sup> is to be rejected. It was noted earlier that 2 Ki. 18:4 does not refer to Nehushtan as a saraph, and it can be added that it does not say that it was on a pole. Moreover, Shanda has noted that 2 Ki. 18:4 does not specifically say that the image was located in the temple.<sup>123</sup> But it seems quite unlikely that it is merely a coincidence that at the time of Isaiah's call, a bronze snake, built by Moses, existed within the Judahite cult, and that the prophet just happens to see seraphim attending Yahweh in the temple, especially since the seraphim appear nowhere else in the Old Testament with this function. The explanation which most readily suggests itself is that Nehushtan is to be connected with Moses' serpent pole,<sup>124</sup> that it was kept in the temple, and that as Isaiah entered a visionary state, he had looked

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<sup>118</sup>Marti, 1900, 64f.

<sup>119</sup>Joines, 1968, 251f.

<sup>120</sup>Ibid, 253.

<sup>121</sup>Gressmann, 1913, 458.

<sup>122</sup>Murison, 126; Rowley, 1939, 138.

<sup>123</sup>Shanda, 241.

<sup>124</sup>Duhm, 1892, 44; J. Day, 151.

upon this image, so that it was responsible for the appearance of seraphim in his vision.<sup>125</sup> That this is the explanation for the form which Yahweh's attendants take in the vision is supported by the observation that unless there was something present to induce Isaiah to see seraphim, we could logically expect him to see cherubim. Images of the latter had long existed in the temple, and were associated with the ark, the place of Yahweh's enthronement.

Since Nehushtan appears to have played an important role in Isaiah's call vision, one has to question the assertion that it was the influence of Isaiah which prompted the destruction of Nehushtan.<sup>126</sup> It is unlikely that he would have called for the destruction of an object important to his call experience. He apparently saw nothing wrong with seraphim serving Yahweh as priests, and although he may well have objected to burning incense to it, all that had to be done was to put an end to this activity. The main point here is that there is total silence on this aspect of the reforms, as with the others, although the uniqueness of the act and the important role Nehushtan may have played in Isaiah's call vision would lead one to expect some reference to this.

## VII. Conclusions.

It is at this point that conclusions can be drawn about the significance of the situation involving Isaiah and the reforms of Hezekiah in relation to Jeremiah and Josiah's reforms. The examination of the reforms enacted by Hezekiah indicated that Josiah's actions were very similar to those of his great-grandfather, and that this includes the centralisation of the cult in Jerusalem achieved by removing the *bamoth*. The only notable differences between them is that under Josiah, Deuteronomy was discovered and publicly made the basis of life in Judah from Josiah's eighteenth year onward, and that Hezekiah destroyed the long-honoured bronze serpent-image called Nehushtan, whose origin was attributed to Moses. Thus centralisation of the cult was not a new development in Josiah's reign. It was really a reactionary policy, and given that Hezekiah's earlier attempt to implement it had

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<sup>125</sup>G. B. Gray, 1912, 105; Wildberger, 1982, 243f.

<sup>126</sup>Pace Cheyne, 1880, 36f; Kennett, 1920, 11f.

dramatically failed to change the nation, it is understandable that it did not become a primary concern in Jeremiah's preaching when Josiah tried it. Jeremiah knew from historical precedent that a measure which would temporarily improve the external character of Judah's worship of Yahweh would not necessarily change the hearts and minds of the people, unless someone in his own prophetic calling focused on supplementing the cultic reform with a demand for personal reform. Thus Jeremiah could continue to urge an inward spiritual change during Josiah's centralisation of the cult, knowing that it would take much more to appease the wrath of Yahweh. Hezekiah's centralisation was unprecedented, and thus Isaiah did not have the hindsight of Jeremiah. Therefore of the two prophets, it is really Isaiah who should refer to the removal of the *bamoth*, if this is to be demanded. But the requirement that Jeremiah refer to the reforms, when this is lacking with Isaiah, as well as the two different methods of dealing with this by scholars working with Isaiah and Jeremiah, may suggest a lack of consistency. When it is further noted that Isaiah says nothing about the destruction of Nehushtan, which figured prominently in his call experience, one may conclude that if Jeremiah does not specifically refer to, or take a position on, the reforms of Josiah, he has a good precedent in Isaiah. However, it is really the case that there is a significant difference here between Isaiah and Jeremiah. The latter does take a specific position on that aspect unique to Josiah's reforms, i.e. the promotion of Deuteronomy to the religious, legal, and social definition of the nation's covenant with Yahweh. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 6

## JEREMIAH AND THE REFORMS OF JOSIAH

### I. Introduction.

The purpose of this chapter will be to demonstrate what was said at the conclusion of chapter five, i.e. that Jeremiah, unlike Isaiah, does specifically take a position on that element of Josiah's reforms which was unique to the latter, namely the official adoption of Deuteronomy in 622. The question of Jeremiah's relationship to the reforms of Josiah can be examined in two different ways: the prophet may have been officially involved in the reform movement, or he may have remained outside the institutions of Judahite society, acting independently. The discussion which follows will examine the issues important in determining Jeremiah's position on Josiah's reforms including historical contacts between Jeremiah and Josiah, whether Jeremiah was a cultic prophet or government official, the role of Huldah in the events of 622, Jeremiah's position on the sacrificial cult, and several important texts which are relevant to the question of Jeremiah's view of Josiah and the reforms (11:1ff; 8:8f; 31:31ff; and 22:13ff).

### II. Official Involvement in the Reforms of Josiah.



## 1. Historical Contacts between Jeremiah and Josiah's Reign.

The prose narratives in the book of Jeremiah never depict an historical occurrence set in Josiah's reign, in contrast to the period of time comprising the reigns of Jehoiakim and Zedekiah. Likewise, the accounts of Josiah's reign in Kings and Chronicles do not connect Jeremiah with Josiah. The only historical link at all is in 2 Chr. 35:25, which records that Jeremiah lamented upon Josiah's death. In Jer. 22:10, the prophet actually demands that Judah stop mourning for Josiah. But this does not indicate that 2 Chr. 35:25 should be understood as unreliable, and simply attempting to link Jeremiah with the book of Lamentations.<sup>1</sup> The latter deals with the fall of Jerusalem in 587, not Josiah's death, and 2 Chr. 35:25 does not say that Jeremiah's lamentation was written in the מִקְרָא. The latter is relevant to the dirges of "all the male and female singers." Nor does the Chronicler's claim conflict with Jer. 22:10, since the latter simply indicates that once Jehoahaz was dethroned the people should for lament him, and thereby show more concern for the present than the past.<sup>2</sup> Zech. 12:11 demonstrates how significant the mourning for Josiah had been,<sup>3</sup> and there is no reason to doubt Jeremiah's participation. Nonetheless, 2 Chr. 35:25 draws no connection between Jeremiah and Josiah's reign in general.

1 Esdr. 1:28 (cf. 2 Chr. 35:22) and Midrash Rabbah 1:53<sup>4</sup> claim that Jeremiah had attempted to dissuade Josiah from facing Necho II in battle, and it has been suggested that Jer. 17: 5-8 is such a warning.<sup>5</sup> However, there is no reliable tradition supporting this, and it is likely that the reference to Jeremiah in the current form of 1 Esdr. 1:28 is the result of a textual corruption, whereby נְכוֹ became נְבִיא, Jeremiah's name being a gloss on the latter.<sup>6</sup> Thus the relevant sources not only do not attest any link between Jeremiah and the reforms, but also no historical link between the prophet and Josiah's reign in general.

## 2. Jeremiah as a Cultic Prophet or Agent of Josiah.

<sup>1</sup>Pace A. B. Davidson, 570; Marti, 1889, 21.

<sup>2</sup>Scharbert, 48.

<sup>3</sup>See Rudolph, 1976, 224f.

<sup>4</sup>Rabbinowitz (ed), 142f.

<sup>5</sup>R. Davidson, 1959, 205.

<sup>6</sup>Charles, 23, ftn. 28.

Two suggestions have been made about Jeremiah which would result in him having some official role in Josiah's reforms. The first proposal is that Jeremiah functioned as a cultic official in Jerusalem, be it as a priest,<sup>7</sup> cult prophet,<sup>8</sup> or reader and interpreter of covenantal texts.<sup>9</sup> However, there is little support for these proposals, and it must be remembered that the Jeremiah tradition does not depict the prophet as holding any official cultic office. While it is true that various liturgical forms which are to be linked to the cult, are found with Jeremiah, it cannot be asserted that Jeremiah did not simply adopt well-known forms,<sup>10</sup> since it is logical that he would utilise the style found in the religious milieu of his time, and his Levitical family background ensures that he would have had exposure to cultic forms. But the fact that Jeremiah is never portrayed as functioning as a priest does not lead to the conclusion that he did not come from a priestly family,<sup>11</sup> only that his position as a prophet of Yahweh required his independence from those he judged. This view of Jeremiah accords with that which McKane forwards about the prophets in general, i.e. that they were to be found on the fringes of the institutions of Judahite society.<sup>12</sup> The same reply can be made to the proposal that Jeremiah was a member of the Deuteronomistic circle.<sup>13</sup>

It has also been suggested that Jeremiah was one of a group of reformers sent out after the public presentation of Deuteronomy in 622 as readers of the law book in the towns and villages of Judah (11:1ff).<sup>14</sup> While it is true that 11:1ff is a critical passage, and does indicate that Jeremiah spoke out in support of Deuteronomy (see below), the idea that he had actually read aloud from a written copy is based on the assertion that the verb קרא means "to read aloud" in 11:6.<sup>15</sup> Jer. 36:10 indicates that it can have this meaning, but in Jer. 2:2; 3:12; and 7:2, the verb is used of oral declaration, the meaning it probably has in 11:6. As Orelli notes, in 11:6 Jeremiah

<sup>7</sup>Ball, 10.

<sup>8</sup>Granild, 139, 143; Reventlow, 14ff, 258ff.

<sup>9</sup>Weiser, 1966, 95.

<sup>10</sup>Pace Reventlow, 14ff, 258ff.

<sup>11</sup>Pace Meek, 215ff; Hyatt, 1940, 511.

<sup>12</sup>McKane, 1982, 266.

<sup>13</sup>Pace Johnstone, 47ff.

<sup>14</sup>Graf, 1862, 176f; Wildeboer, 202ff.

<sup>15</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 87f; Nägelsbach, 1871, 127f.

receives his task from Yahweh, not Josiah.<sup>16</sup> It is thus tenuous to see Jeremiah functioning as an agent of the king, rather than independently.

### 3. The Role of the Prophetess Huldah in the Events of 622.

Jeremiah's lack of official involvement in the reforms is made more noticeable by the role of Huldah. It was this otherwise unknown prophetess who was consulted about Deuteronomy in 622, not Jeremiah. As was noted earlier, this fact has been connected with the perceived need to lower the date at which Jeremiah became active, with the idea being that if Jeremiah had been prophesying since 627, Josiah's delegation would have sought his opinion in 622. But this view is rather tenuous, given the fact that there is a logical explanation for this situation. The fact that nothing more is known about Huldah than that in 2 Ki. 22 and 2 Chr. 34 should not be interpreted as indicating that she was an obscure figure,<sup>17</sup> since there were many prophets in Jeremiah's time who received little or no attention in Old Testament historical works (e.g. Uriah, Hananiah). The royal delegation comprised officials of high rank, and it is probable that they would have sought out someone of considerable authority. But the question remains as to why she was chosen in 622.

Different approaches to this issue have been taken. It has been suggested that she was consulted because she was a woman, and would therefore be more likely to give a conciliatory response.<sup>18</sup> However, this is a condescending explanation, and Huldah's answer shows that a prophetess was just as ready to announce doom as her male counterparts. Another proposal is that Jeremiah's tendency to be negative excluded him from consideration, and Duhm maintains that the prophet was already known to be in opposition to the reforms and Deuteronomy (Jer. 8:8f).<sup>19</sup> But it will be argued below that 8:8f does not indicate opposition to Deuteronomy, and it should be noted that many scholars who nonetheless understand it that way, date 8:8f later

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<sup>16</sup>Orelli, 1905, 63.

<sup>17</sup>So Cheyne, 1888, 52; Benzinger, 189ff, *pace* Puukko, 134.

<sup>18</sup>Rabbi Shilah in *b. Meg.* 14b, Simon (ed); Shanda, 334.

<sup>19</sup>A. B. Davidson, 569; Cheyne, "Huldah," 1901, 2133; Duhm, 1901, 89.

than 622. Clearly a denunciation of Deuteronomy would have to have followed its discovery. Moreover, Jeremiah's critical preaching thus far would not have ruled him out, since if the delegation were familiar enough with his views to reach such a conclusion, they would also have known that the moral and social demands of Deuteronomy, as well as its stress on the covenant and inward turning to God, were in accordance with Jeremiah's own views. A third approach holds that Huldah was an institutional figure, and was consulted for this reason. She was the wife of Shallum, a wardrobe official, although it is not known whether he was associated with the temple,<sup>20</sup> or the palace.<sup>21</sup> Gray holds that as the wife of such an official, she would be more likely to give a favourable reply.<sup>22</sup> But there is no indication that the delegation was deliberately seeking a positive response, and if they were, they made a poor choice. The Targumist and Rashi see in Huldah a teacher of torah, with the former rendering *חַשְׁבֵּה* ("second district") as *בֵּית אוֹלָפֶן* ("house of torah-study"), cleverly playing on the name for the king's copy of Deuteronomy in Deut. 17:18 (*חֹרֶף הַחֹרֶף*). However, this is nothing more than a clever word-play. Others propose that she was a cult prophetess,<sup>23</sup> and being a religious official explains why she was chosen. But as with Jeremiah, it is nothing more than a guess that Huldah was a cult figure. A fourth approach maintains that the prophet was away from Jerusalem in 622, either because he was preaching to the Northerners,<sup>24</sup> or because he was still living in Anathoth.<sup>25</sup> But it can be objected that the former simply assumes a coincidence, whereas it is more plausible that a substantial reason underlies the decision not to consult Jeremiah. While he may still have lived in Anathoth in 622, he will have frequently appeared in Jerusalem before that date to pronounce oracles,<sup>26</sup> and it should be noted that Anathoth was only an hour north-east of Jerusalem.<sup>27</sup> Thus it would not have been difficult to contact Jeremiah if this was desired.

<sup>20</sup>Kittel, 1900, 299; Priest, 366ff.

<sup>21</sup>Robinson, 1932, 418; Thiel, 1973, 58.

<sup>22</sup>J. Gray, 1977, 726.

<sup>23</sup>Priest, 367f; Handy, 1994, 49.

<sup>24</sup>Rabbi Johanan in *b. Meg.* 14b, Simon (ed).

<sup>25</sup>Venema, 1; Rosenmüller, 241; Rudolph, 1968, IIIf; Cazalles, 1984, 108f.

<sup>26</sup>So Rudolph, 1968, IIIf, *pace* Pfeiffer, 495.

<sup>27</sup>Puukko, 134.

The best explanation for why Jeremiah was not consulted in 622 is that he had not yet become prominent enough to merit a consultation by a royal delegation.<sup>28</sup> It is important not to assess this situation with the benefit of hindsight. While Jeremiah eventually became one of the most significant prophetic characters of the Old Testament, he did not have this reputation when he first appeared. His prophetic statements required some degree of confirmation in order to distinguish him from the other prophetic voices of the time.<sup>29</sup> As was argued in chapter four, this did not occur until 605, and the fact that Jeremiah is not consulted by the government until Zedekiah's reign supports the normal process by which a person gradually gains influence and authority. A similar development can be seen with Isaiah, who is not consulted by a king until Hezekiah's reign (Isa. 37:1ff). The important consideration here is that Jeremiah was not consulted because he had not yet distinguished himself, and no other reason, e.g. the idea that he was discredited because of failed Scythian oracles,<sup>30</sup> need be sought.

#### 4. Conclusions.

The above discussion suggests that Jeremiah did not have an official position in implementing the reforms under Josiah. A plausible view is that the young, village prophet whose veracity and credibility remained unconfirmed as of yet, was only a minor figure in the events of the years 628-622. But as he was only in the beginning of his climb to prominence, the fact that he had no official position in the execution of the reforms, and did not have the authority which would induce Josiah's delegation to seek out his opinion, do not provide grounds for rejecting 627 as the beginning of his prophetic career.

### III. Unofficial Involvement in the Reforms: Introduction.

Although it has been concluded above that Jeremiah had no official involvement in the reforms, it remains to determine whether

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<sup>28</sup>Marti, 1889, 16; Skinner, 1948, 89, 96; Rowley, 1950, 172; Thiel, 1973, 58.

<sup>29</sup>Rowley, 1950, 172; J. Paterson, 537.

<sup>30</sup>*Pace* Cornill, 1905, 84f; Liechtenhan, 16; Rowley, 1962/3, 225.



he was unofficially involved, and whether he takes a position on some aspect of Josiah's reformation. It will be argued below that this is indeed case, and that therefore an emendation of the date at which Jeremiah began his prophetic career, especially when this is linked to the claim that Jeremiah does not specifically refer to the reforms, is incorrect. The proposal has been made that Jeremiah originally did make optimistic statements about the reforms, but that this material was omitted by the prophet after the reaction under Jehoiakim set in.<sup>31</sup> But this assumes the existence of prophetic oracles of which there is no trace, and it should be said that there is sufficient material in the current book to determine Jeremiah's position on the most important aspect of the reforms, namely the publication of Deuteronomy in 622. First the issue of Jeremiah's view of the sacrificial cult will be examined (6:20; 7:21ff), and then three other critical passages (11:1ff; 8:8f; and 31: 31-34), in order to define Jeremiah's position on the events of 622.

#### IV. Jeremiah and the Cult.

##### 1. Introductory Comments.

The issue of Jeremiah's position on the sacrificial cult, and indeed that of the prophets in general, is a much disputed issue which was discussed in relation to Isaiah in chapter five. It could be held that if Jeremiah rejected the cult itself, then he would have been opposed to Josiah's reforms, including Deuteronomy.<sup>32</sup> The latter contains sacrificial legislation combined with a very high standard for moral and social life. While some scholars see the moral ideas as its main emphasis,<sup>33</sup> others suggest that its focal point is its cultic law.<sup>34</sup> In truth, Deuteronomy stresses both. However, one point which should be made is that even if Jeremiah opposed the cult *per se*, this would not necessarily lead to the conclusion that he opposed cultic centralisation. The latter would have had a considerable desacrilisation effect, whereby the role of sacrifice

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<sup>31</sup>Steuernagel, 568; Rowton, 130. Cf. Rose, 50.

<sup>32</sup>So Kennett, 1920, 15f, 18, 31, 51, 59.

<sup>33</sup>Wellhausen, 1894, 93ff; Procksch, 1902, 81f.

<sup>34</sup>Puukko, 140.

would be greatly diminished.<sup>35</sup> With all cultic activity limited to the Jerusalem temple, those living outside the capital would experience legal sacrificial religion, at the very most, during the three pilgrimage festivals, i.e. three times a year. This would represent a tremendous reduction of sacrificial activity in comparison to the time when the various *bamoth* functioned throughout Judah. Thus even if Jeremiah were totally opposed to the cult, the enforcement of cultic centralisation could potentially bring about such an undermining of sacrifice as an indispensable part of Yahwism, that the only reason he would not support it is that he was absolutely uncompromising and unable to recognise a phenomenon which could fundamentally move the religious conceptions of the people toward his ideal. But the following discussion will suggest that Jeremiah was not opposed to the cult itself.

## 2. 6:16-26.

### A. Unit Delineation and Textual Criticism.

The issue of unit delineation is especially significant for understanding 6:20, because only if the latter verse is not examined in light of the larger context can a rejection of the cult itself be derived from it. Volz regards 6:20 as a unit by itself, whereas scholars such as Thiel view 6:16-21 to be a Deuteronomistic piece in which 6:18f is regarded as redactional, and incorporating the originally separate 6:20.<sup>36</sup> But the deletion of vv. 18f is wrong, since they provide the reason for the statement about the cult in 6:20, and the removal of these passages results from a desire to remove the qualification placed on 6:20. However, it is clear that 6:19 simply specifies the nature of the statement in 6:16, where the "watchers" are Israel's prophets<sup>37</sup> who call the people back to the moral and social demands of the covenant. Thus 6:16 presupposes moral apostasy, and places the same qualification on 6:20 as vv. 18f. The separation of 6:20 from its context is done purely for the sake of removing such qualifications from it. The material in 6:16ff does

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<sup>35</sup>Cf. Schultz, 281f; Lods, 154.

<sup>36</sup>Volz, 1928, 81; Thiel, 1973, 100ff. For vv. 18f, see also Duhm, 1901, 71f; Cornill, 1905, 79f.

<sup>37</sup>So Kimchi; Carroll, 1986, 200.

not display the incoherence often attributed to it.<sup>38</sup> Holladay has demonstrated that 6: 16-26 is a single piece presenting a covenant law suit, and that structurally it contains statements by Yahweh, a witness, the people, and Jeremiah.<sup>39</sup> When the piece is understood in this way, coherence is no longer an issue.

Like most passages in Jeremiah, various textual-critical problems arise. But most of these do not affect the general idea in the passage. 6:18b presents the more serious problems, but whether one follows MT or LXX, 18a clearly indicates that the gentiles are being addressed.<sup>40</sup> One should not object to the prophet doing this,<sup>41</sup> since in 6:18 he reverses the idea of 2:10f. In the latter, an Israelite audience is told to observe the religious faithfulness of the gentiles in order to contrast this with the unfaithfulness of the covenant people. In 6:18, the religiously faithful gentiles are told to observe the faithless covenant people. This argues in favour of understanding אֲשֶׁר־בָּם (6:18b) in the general sense of "that which is in them," and following Rashi in relating this to the people's sin.

#### B. The Meaning of 6:16ff.

Some scholars have seen in 6:20 a rejection of the cult itself,<sup>42</sup> but it was noted above that this verse is part of a larger unit, and when the context is taken into account, this interpretation is unlikely. 6: 16-19 states that Judah is a people who has refused to heed the prophet's call to return to the moral and social stipulations of Yahweh, and has therefore rejected His demands. It is for this reason that the people's cultic observance is said to be unacceptable to Yahweh in 6:20. Thus the issue is not the presence of expensive innovations in the sacrificial cult such as incense.<sup>43</sup> Nor can this material be cited in favour of the view that Jeremiah only regards moral stipulations to be "torah."<sup>44</sup> While it is clear that in 6:16ff the nation's failings are moral and social in nature, this does not

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<sup>38</sup>Pace McKane, 1986, lxxxiii, 148f.

<sup>39</sup>Holladay, 1986, 218ff; for the same unit delineation see also Graf, 1862, 104f; Nägelsbach, 1871, 83.

<sup>40</sup>Pace Ehrlich, 258.

<sup>41</sup>Pace Cornill, 1905, 80.

<sup>42</sup>Volz, 1928, 81; Fohrer, 1952, 352; 1974, 65; Thiel, 1973, 101, 125.

<sup>43</sup>Pace Duhm, 1901, 71f; Peake, 1910, 143; Carroll, 1986, 201.

<sup>44</sup>Pace Hyatt, 1941, 389ff.

exclude the cult from "torah." The prophet is simply countering the prevalent idea that cult and morality can be separated within the covenant, and that fervent practise of the former can compensate for disregard of the latter. Some scholars have interpreted 6:16ff as the prophet's condemnation of Deuteronomy because of its main emphasis being on cultic practise.<sup>45</sup> But it must be said that Deuteronomy does not elevate sacrifice over moral obligations, and while it is precisely this misunderstanding which Jeremiah condemns here, Deuteronomy is not responsible for it. As Bright notes, it is the people who are condemned.<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, it is not clear that the unit is to be dated after 622. While 6:20 presupposes a purified Yahweh cult, this fits any time during the period 628-622. Two conclusions can be reached by reading 6:20 in light of its context. First, the prophet does not repudiate the cult here, but rather rejects it as a replacement for morality.<sup>47</sup> Secondly, the prophet holds that purely cultic acts will not turn aside Yahweh's punishment for Judah's sins.<sup>48</sup>

### 3. 7:21ff.

#### A. Authenticity and Textual Criticism.

It should be noted from the outset that 7:21ff occurs within a block of material frequently assigned to the Deuteronomistic redactors, i.e. 7:1-8:3. But it is noteworthy that some prominent adherents of the Deuteronomistic redaction theory maintain that Jeremiah's own view of the cult is preserved here.<sup>49</sup> But more to the point, the conclusion reached earlier in this study was that the *Prosareden* utilise a style used widely in seventh century Judah. Therefore 7:21ff should not be understood as reflecting the view of a later period.<sup>50</sup> There are several textual-critical aspects relevant to the different versions, but these are of minor significance, and do not affect the basic sense of the oracle. The translation and

<sup>45</sup>Skinner, 1948, 114ff, 181ff; H. Schmidt, 258f.

<sup>46</sup>Bright, 1965, 50.

<sup>47</sup>Rowley, 1946/7a, 70; Thompson, 260ff; Holladay, 1986, 223.

<sup>48</sup>Orelli, 1905, 39; Hölscher, 1914, 227; D. R. Jones, 1992, 137f.

<sup>49</sup>Hyatt, 1947, 128; 1969, 214; Thiel, 1973, 122ff.

<sup>50</sup>Pace Horst, 1923a, 116f; Nicholson, 1973, 80f; Carroll, 1986, 214ff.

interpretation of עַל־דְּבָרַי in 7:22 will be seen to be highly significant, and will be discussed in part B.

#### B. The Meaning of 7:21ff: the Question of the Mosaic Origin of Sacrifice.

There are really two questions relevant to 7:21ff, namely whether Jeremiah is repudiating the cult itself, and whether he is denying that there was revelation about sacrifice in the Exodus period. Even if the latter question is answered in the affirmative, this does not necessitate the same answer to the first question. Many scholars who understand 7:22f as denying the Mosaic origin of sacrificial regulations, nonetheless do not believe that Jeremiah is rejecting the cult *per se*.<sup>51</sup> At this point it is appropriate to address the second question first.

If Jeremiah is denying in 7:22f that Yahweh revealed cultic regulations to Israel during the Exodus period, then a substantial contradiction with the current Pentateuch results. The view that this is the case has become a significant tenet in Pentateuchal criticism as formulated by Graf and others. Amos 5:25f has often been cited in support of denying a Mosaic origin of Israelite sacrificial legislation. Technically, this passage does not imply that there was no revelation about sacrifice in the Exodus period, only that Israel did not carry out such sacrifices. But 5:26 suggests that Amos is questioning whether the Exodus generation really worshipped Yahweh or pagan gods, making the issue larger than simply sacrifice.

Many scholars have rightly questioned the validity of the answer to this question as forwarded by Graf and others, and various explanations have been offered for 7:22f which posit that Jeremiah is not denying that sacrificial regulations derive from Yahweh. One approach holds that 7:22f simply represent hyperbole or rhetorical exaggeration,<sup>52</sup> or that Jeremiah really intends to focus only on that part of the Exodus revelation which was most important.<sup>53</sup> The problem with this approach is the difficulty in determining when a prophet really intends the obvious meaning of his words. After all,

<sup>51</sup>Graf, 1862, 121ff; 1866, 70f; Duhm, 1901, 81f; J. Paterson, 539.

<sup>52</sup>Henderson, 52f; Rowley, 1946/7a, 69ff.

<sup>53</sup>Bright, 1965, 56f; Clements, 48f.



the statement made in 7:22f seems to be clear and straightforward, and thus one would need a compelling reason to believe that he does not mean what he says. Another problematic suggestion is that the expression *ביום הוציא אותם מארץ מצרים* in 7:22 refers to either the actual event of leaving Egypt, when God simply demanded obedience, or the first phase of the Sinai revelation, i.e. the Decalogue, before cultic regulations were given.<sup>54</sup> Cazalles suggests that Jeremiah has in mind Deuteronomy's presentation of the law, whereby the bulk of the commandments are not given until the end of the forty-year wilderness period.<sup>55</sup> The problem arises with Jer. 34:13, where the same expression is used in relation to the law of freed Hebrew slaves (Exod. 21:1ff; Deut. 15:12ff), which is not part of the Decalogue, but rather part of the later phase of revelation. Thus the use of *ביום הוציא אותם מארץ מצרים* does not refer to an early stage of the Exodus period. Finally one may note that several commentators maintain that Jeremiah is speaking of voluntary sacrifices, not those required by legislation. Milgrom notes the use of *עולה* and *זבח* in 7:22, and presents Pentateuchal texts suggesting that the combination of the two basically indicates voluntary offerings which Jeremiah may repudiate without contravening Mosaic revelation.<sup>56</sup> But this conclusion conflicts with Deut. 12:11, which specifically states that Yahweh has given commands (*מצוה*) about *עולותיכם וזבחיכם* (אֲנִי) whereas Jer. 7:22 appears to claim that God did not issue commands (*ולא צויתים*) about these.

The solution to the problem is to be found in the grammatical meaning of *על-דבר* in 7:22. It has been suggested that the proper translation is not "about" or "concerning," but rather "because of" or "for the sake of."<sup>57</sup> As concerns the use of the expression involving the singular noun (*על-דבר*), there are ten occurrences where the latter meaning is preferable: Gen. 12:17; 20:11, 18; 43:18; Num. 17:14; 25:18 (3x); 31:16; Ps. 79:9, and one where it is possible (Exod. 8:8). The use of the plural form of the expression (*על-דברים*) to mean "because of, for the sake of" is attested in Jer. 14:1, where the translation "because of the droughts" is viable. Thus it can be concluded that the point Jeremiah is making in 7:22 is that Yahweh

<sup>54</sup>Kimchi, Jerome, Thompson, 287f.

<sup>55</sup>Cazalles, 1984, 99ff.

<sup>56</sup>Milgrom, 1977, 273ff; Holladay, 1986, 262; Craigie, 124.

<sup>57</sup>Binns, 75ff; Freedman, 56.

did not bring Jacob's descendants out of Egypt and reveal His desire to enter into a special covenant with them because He was seeking sacrifices. What Yahweh wanted was obedience; and cultic exercises, when practised by a disobedient people, were meaningless.

### C. 7:21ff and the Issue of the Repudiation of the Cult.

The second question pertains to whether Jeremiah is repudiating the cult itself in 7:21ff, and many scholars have answered this in the affirmative.<sup>58</sup> However, as in the case of 6:20, so too 7:21 must be read in light of its context. Thiel regards 7:21b to be an authentic statement of Jeremiah contained in a predominantly Deuteronomistic composition.<sup>59</sup> This leaves the statement by itself, and the problem of reading the passage apart from its context is that it is clearly a response to something the prophet has observed. Any quote taken out of context is liable to be misunderstood. Peake has aptly proposed that 7:21ff is the continuation of the temple address in 7: 1-15,<sup>60</sup> and observations can be made in support of this. The reference to עֹלָה and זָבַח suggests the temple cult, and this is precisely where the prophet is found in 7:1ff. In the latter he enumerates the manifest moral failures of people who are otherwise fervent participants in the cult. 7:21ff is a good continuation of this, and provides that which is necessary to understand this passage, i.e. a cultic setting and a cause for the prophet's indignation. Moreover, the discussion of 7:22f has demonstrated that these verses state that the fundamental reason for Yahweh bringing Israel out of Egypt was to establish a covenantal relationship in which the people would adhere to His principle demands. The only reason why Jeremiah would have stated this is that the situation he was confronting demonstrated that these principle demands were being ignored. Thus 7:21 suggests a scenario in which cultic sacrifice had gained an importance that it did not intrinsically have. These two conditions are admirably met in 7: 1-15, where there is a total disregard for the most basic moral requirements of Yahweh, in the belief that fervent

<sup>58</sup>Cadoux, 1946/7, 43ff; Snaith, 1946/7, 152f; Rudolph, 1968, 56ff; Schofield, 179f.

<sup>59</sup>Thiel, 1973, 103, 122ff.

<sup>60</sup>Peake, 1910, 149; cf. Giesebrecht, 1907, 45, 49f.

cultic practise would compensate for this (7:10). This suggests that 7:21ff is part of the same address as 7: 1-15. Therefore the cult polemic does not condemn sacrifice *per se*,<sup>61</sup> but rather cultic observance by those who view it as a replacement for Yahweh's moral demands.

The conclusion to be reached from the discussion of 6:20 and 7:21ff is that Jeremiah did not reject the sacrificial cult itself, but did view the latter as meaningless when practised by people who ignored the moral and social requirements of the covenant with Yahweh. A similar conclusion was reached about Isaiah in chapter five, and may well be valid for the canonical prophets in general.<sup>62</sup>

## V. Jeremiah and Deuteronomy: 11: 1-14.

### 1. Introduction.

As was suggested in section I, Jeremiah does take a specific position on that feature of Josiah's reforms which distinguishes them from the reforms of Hezekiah, i.e. the public presentation of Deuteronomy in 622. The relevant text is Jer. 11:1ff, which has been the subject of much debate. Therefore this passage must be examined in order to determine its precise significance for the matter at hand. Since the two texts in 8:8f and 31: 31-34 are relevant in relation to 11:1ff, these too will be discussed.

### 2. Authenticity.

The most debated issue relevant to 11:1ff is that of authenticity. This passage, which is the most important part of the book of Jeremiah in relation to the issue of Jeremiah's view of Josiah's reforms, has often been treated as inauthentic. Some reject the material partly for stylistic reasons, and because it links Jeremiah with Deuteronomy.<sup>63</sup> However, many would classify it as a work of the Deuteronomistic redactors of Jeremiah, dismissing the material's usefulness in determining Jeremiah's own views.<sup>64</sup> Yet

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<sup>61</sup>So Hitzig, 1866, 63; Puukko, 151f; Lods, 68f.

<sup>62</sup>See Rowley, 1946/7b, 305ff; 1956, 338ff.

<sup>63</sup>Duhm, 1901, 109ff; Cornill, 1905, 143ff; Hölscher, 1914, 393f.

<sup>64</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 789; Stoebe, 400; Nicholson, 1973, 107ff; Herrmann, 1965, 159; 193, 218 (ftn. 10); 1990, 44, 84, 86.

other commentators who regard the current form of 11:1ff to be shaped by Deuteronomistic redactors, nonetheless maintain that it is based on a reliable event in Jeremiah's life.<sup>65</sup> The main issue is the syntax and style, and while it can be restated that the position adopted earlier is that the *Prosarede*-form was used by Jeremiah, there is a more important consideration in this particular case. Robert, who accepts an *atmosphère commune* involving the language of Jeremiah and Deuteronomy, nonetheless notes that in vv. 2-5 the use of Deuteronomic language is so dense, that it is a *centonisation* of expressions, and thus cannot have come from Jeremiah.<sup>66</sup> However, G. A. Smith, Robinson, and Holladay see in 11:1ff a response to a public reading of Deuteronomy, and this satisfactorily explains the wording of the material.<sup>67</sup>

It has often been suggested that 11: 1-8 either contains two parallel pieces,<sup>68</sup> or a small core which has undergone extensive expansion,<sup>69</sup> and the material is frequently divided into vv. 2-5 and 6-8, although there is disagreement as to which is the original.<sup>70</sup> But scholars such as Thiel and McKane have argued that the two sections are not parallels, the latter noting that vv. 2-5 represent a discussion between Yahweh and Jeremiah, whereas 11:6ff speak of a public declaration.<sup>71</sup> This assessment is basically sound, and will be discussed later. In the case of vv. 1-8, the matter is complicated by the LXX's omission of 11:7, and all but the last two words of 11:8. But MT should not be regarded as an expanded text,<sup>72</sup> since the Septuagint has omitted the verses, either intentionally,<sup>73</sup> or because of haplography.<sup>74</sup> The use of *לָלֶכֶת* in 11:8 is consistent with a reflection on the past,<sup>75</sup> i.e. intending the events of 722 and 701, and does not presuppose the exile.<sup>76</sup> 11: 11-14 has also been dismissed

<sup>65</sup>Weiser, 1966, 94; Rudolph, 1968, XVII, 77, 79; D. R. Jones, 1992, 181f.

<sup>66</sup>Robert, 11.

<sup>67</sup>G. A. Smith, 1923, 145 (ftn. 3); Robinson, 1932, 427; Holladay, 1986, 326f.

<sup>68</sup>Cheyne, 1888, 56, (ftn. 1); Procksch, 1902, 81; Volz, 1928, 129; Welch, 1928, 93.

See also the source-criticism of Horst, 1923a, 119ff.

<sup>69</sup>Erbt, 140; Skinner, 1948, 98.

<sup>70</sup>Vv. 2-5 as original: H. Schmidt, 239f; von Rad, 101; Fohrer, 1974, 93. Vv. 6ff as original: Robert, 9ff.

<sup>71</sup>Thiel, 1973, 148, 156; McKane, 1986, 236.

<sup>72</sup>Pace Duhm, 1901, 108; Bright, 1965, 89; McKane, 1986, 238.

<sup>73</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 76; Thiel, 1973, 148ff.

<sup>74</sup>Holladay, 1986, 346f.

<sup>75</sup>Graf, 1862, 179; Kelley, 170.

<sup>76</sup>Pace Mowinckel, 1913, 31; Carroll, 1986, 267, 269.

as secondary,<sup>77</sup> or at least regarded as substantially expanded.<sup>78</sup> But the appearance of parallel material elsewhere in the book suggests that Jeremiah repeated himself at times, and certainly vv. 11-13 display a logical development: first the people cry to Yahweh, who will not listen (11:11). So they cry out to idols, who in reality cannot save them (11:12).

### 3. Identification of the Covenant.

Despite the manifest parallels in language and expression with Deuteronomy, many commentators sharply distinguish between a Sinai covenant (Exod. 24) and a Moab covenant (Deuteronomy), and maintain that the reference to the covenant in Jer. 11:1ff pertains only to the former.<sup>79</sup> A few observations can be made against this view. The expression beginning with בְּיָמֵינוּ הָיָה was discussed in section IV. 3. B, where it was noted that its use in Jer. 34:13 clearly indicates that it does not specifically indicate an early phase of the forty year Exodus period.<sup>80</sup> While it is true that the expression וְהָיָה לִי לְשֵׁם וְאָנֹכִי אֶהְיֶה לָּכֶם לְאֱלֹהִים in 11:4b does not appear in Deuteronomy, but similar statements do occur in Exodus (e.g. 6:7; 29:45), this is to be explained as due to the fact that a sharp distinction between a Sinai and Moab covenant was not made in Jeremiah's time. It has been noted by various commentators that Deuteronomy, despite some differences in presentation, is essentially a restatement of the Sinai covenant in Exodus, and Thiel argues that Deut. 28:69, which does seem to draw a distinction between two covenants, is a very late element in Deuteronomy.<sup>81</sup> It is also significant that some scholars who do not see here a specific reference to Deuteronomy nonetheless acknowledge that Josiah's covenant ceremony of 622 was a renewal of the Sinai covenant.<sup>82</sup> It was noted earlier that some commentators link the clearly Deuteronomic language with a counter-proclamation to a public reading of Deuteronomy, and there are two notable indications that

<sup>77</sup>Erbt, 141; Giesebrecht, 1907, 70; H. Schmidt, 240f.

<sup>78</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 89; Peake, 1910, 180.

<sup>79</sup>König, 1915, 442; Volz, 1928, 130; Welch, 1928, 93; Rudolph, 1968, 77ff; Fohrer, 1974, 94f.

<sup>80</sup>So Giesebrecht, 1907, 50f.

<sup>81</sup>Thiel, 1973, 145ff; McKane, 1986, 239; Carroll, 1986, 269f; D. R. Jones, 1991, 182.

<sup>82</sup>Volz, 1928, 130; Weiser, 1966, 95 (ftn. 1); Thompson, 341.



11:1ff aims specifically at Deuteronomy. First, the expression *הוא* (11:2, 3, 6) is clearly used of Deuteronomy in Deut. 29:8, and most importantly, in relation to Josiah's public reading of it in 2 Ki. 23:3. But equally as important is the act of cursing anyone who refuses to adhere to the "words of this covenant," introduced by *אָרֹר*. Jeremiah's response is *אָמֵן*, which is clearly a re-enactment of the curse ritual found in Deut. 27:11ff, whereby the Levites read aloud a series of curses, and the people respond *אָמֵן* to each one. 11:3 is a summation of the individual curses, and is similar to Deut. 27:26. This confirms that 11:1ff refers to Deuteronomy, and provides the key to dating and understanding the material more precisely.

#### 4. The Relationship of 11: 1-8 to 9ff; and the Date of the Material.

The connection with Deuteronomy discussed above is the most significant element in understanding 11:1ff. However, a closely related aspect is that of the relationship between vv. 1-8 and 9ff. The former describe Jeremiah's call to preach on behalf of the covenant, and the latter state that Yahweh has discovered a conspiracy on the part of the people, whereby they return to the sins of *אבותם הראשונים* ("their former fathers"). Clearly 11:9ff indicate that the call to obey the covenant in 11: 1-8 had gone unheeded. The reference to "former fathers" suggests the nation's religion in the pre-reform era, i.e. that preceding Josiah's reforms, with the latter dividing the current people from the "former fathers."<sup>83</sup> This provides a date, i.e. after Josiah's policies lapsed after his death. Thus if 11:9ff reflect the same time as 11: 1-8, then a post-Josianic date results for the whole of 11: 1-14. Several scholars follow this approach, suggesting a date under Jehoiakim,<sup>84</sup> or Zedekiah.<sup>85</sup> While a later date is appropriate for 11:9ff, it is not fitting in the case of vv. 1-8.

The significant indicators of date in 11: 1-8 point to a much earlier time. First, the covenant in vv. 2, 3, and 6 is not specifically defined, nor are its "words" given. The reasons for identifying the covenant mentioned in 1:3 with Deuteronomy were discussed in

<sup>83</sup>Kimchi, Volz, 1928, 133; Fohrer, 1974, 95; Holladay, 1986, 354.

<sup>84</sup>Weiser, 1966, 95 (ftn. 1); Bright, 1965, 89; Thompson, 343.

<sup>85</sup>Scharbert, 51 (or Jehoiakim); Holladay, 1986, 351, 354; Kelley, 171.

section V. 3. But the fact that *בְּרִית* occurs with the demonstrative adjective (*הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת*), rather than just the definite article (*הַבְּרִית*), suggests that some event involving Deuteronomy had occurred, and that Jeremiah is reacting to it in 11: 1-8. If the statement following in 11:4 was intended to identify the covenant in question as some have suggested,<sup>86</sup> then one could expect *הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר* ("the covenant which...") rather than *הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת אֲשֶׁר* ("this covenant which...") in vs. 3. It was noted earlier that some commentators have proposed that this material is a response to a public reading of Deuteronomy. This explains the concentrated Deuteronomistic language, and the fact that Jeremiah and Yahweh enact the public curse ritual of Deut. 27:11ff, which was an important part of the public presentation of Deuteronomy. 11:6 contains a clear order for the prophet to urge obedience to the "words of this covenant," and thus vv. 2-5 represent Jeremiah's response to a public reading of Deuteronomy, whereby his enthusiastic *אָמֵן* is indicative of his positive reaction to it. The fact that Deuteronomy was presented publicly during his lifetime obviates the suggestion that 11: 1-8 is a vision.<sup>87</sup> This suggests that the passage is a response to the events of 622,<sup>88</sup> and that Jeremiah was present during Josiah's covenant ceremony.<sup>89</sup> It has been noted by Erbt and Holladay that Deut. 31:10ff require a septennial reading of Deuteronomy, and that this would have been taken seriously.<sup>90</sup> Some have been skeptical about this,<sup>91</sup> but Josiah's zeal for implementing Deuteronomy, and the reforms in general, make it likely that Deut. 31:10ff was taken seriously. However, given the reaction which took place under Jehoiakim and his successors, when syncretistic practices revived, it is unlikely that the public reading of a document which adamantly condemns such activity continued. This indicates that 11: 1-8 must refer to a public recitation of Deuteronomy under Josiah, and the fact that the reading in 622 was the event at which the covenant was first publicly reinstated, 11: 1-8 should be linked with it. But at the same time, a post-Josianic date for 11: 9-14 must be upheld, since there is no clear support for the supposition that a revival of

<sup>86</sup>König, 1915, 442; Rudolph, 1968, 77ff.

<sup>87</sup>Pace Kaufmann, 420.

<sup>88</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 87; Giesebrecht, 1907, 69f; von Rad, 101.

<sup>89</sup>Pace H. Schmidt, 240; Lundbom, 1992, 687f; 1993, 90.

<sup>90</sup>Erbt, 139; Holladay, 1985, 326ff; 1986, 27.

<sup>91</sup>Carroll, 1986, 44; 1991, 225; Herrmann, 1990, 29.

idolatry had taken place in the later part of Josiah's reign to such an extent that this general accusation was merited.<sup>92</sup> The more natural conclusion is to associate 11:9ff with the time following 609, i.e. after Josiah's reforms ceased and the old practices returned. Thus Jeremiah appeared publicly again, declaring that this represented a conspiracy against Yahweh. Duhm notes that the transition from vs. 8 to 9 is awkward, there being no description of the prophet carrying out the commission in 11:6, and this indicates a chronological gap.<sup>93</sup> This interval is being estimated here as thirteen years, with 11: 1-8 dating to 622, and 11:9ff dating to some time after Jehoiakim's accession.<sup>94</sup>

##### 5. Conclusions: Jeremiah's Position on Deuteronomy.

The conclusions to be reached from the above considerations are two-fold. First, 11:1ff indicates that Jeremiah expressed his support for the principles of Deuteronomy.<sup>95</sup> The extent of his approval is indicated by 11:6, which clearly shows that Jeremiah took it upon himself to encourage obedience to Deuteronomy throughout Judah. Several scholars have objected to this idea, but in many instances, this is due to the *a priori* decision that he simply could not have done this.<sup>96</sup> But as long as he supported Deuteronomy, there is nothing which makes such a scenario unlikely, and Jeremiah's "originality" is not diminished by doing so.<sup>97</sup> Nor should it be maintained that such a task would be unnecessary after Josiah's public ceremony, since simply hearing Deuteronomy read once would not guarantee its inculcation.<sup>98</sup> The introduction of Deuteronomy was a significant development in the reforms which began in 628. What had previously been a primarily cultic reform, and one whose parallel under Hezekiah had failed to produce lasting change, now gained a new dimension as the moral and social standards of Deuteronomy were officially endorsed.

<sup>92</sup>Pace Venema, 302, 309; Blayney, 76f; Hitzig, 1866, 88; Ball, 255f.

<sup>93</sup>Duhm, 1901, 109ff.

<sup>94</sup>So Graf, 1862, 176f; Steuernagel, 546, 568f; J. Paterson, 546f; Feuillet and Robert, 308.

<sup>95</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 127f; Peake, 1910, 12f; Rowley, 1950, 172; Weinfeld, 1976, 25; Cazalles, 1984, 104f; Albertz, 1994, 201f.

<sup>96</sup>A. B. Davidson, 570; Duhm, 1901, 109ff; Cornill, 1905, 143ff.

<sup>97</sup>Pace Volz, 1928, 130.

<sup>98</sup>Pace Schofield, 178.

Combined with its demand for circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16), also voiced by Jeremiah (4:4), the possibility arose that the nation's repentance would go beyond religious practices, and change the foundation of the people's attitude toward Yahweh and their fellow men. This was of course the prophet's goal, and thus it is only natural that Jeremiah would seek to ensure that the most was made of this opportunity to effect a lasting change by publicly advocating acceptance of Deuteronomy.<sup>99</sup>

## VI. 8: 8-9

### 1. Introduction.

At this point, the statement about the torah in 8:8f must be discussed. This passage figures prominently in the views of scholars who either regard Jeremiah as opposed to Deuteronomy from the beginning, or as the basis of the view that his initial support for it later gave way to disappointment and opposition. It will be argued below that Jer. 8:8f does not condemn Deuteronomy, but rather speaks of the written torah being made useless by the nation's behaviour. Thus 8:8f can be understood in harmony with the interpretation of 11:1ff advocated in section V.

### 2. Unit Delineation and Textual-Critical Issues.

Unit delineation is particularly important here, since the type of statement found in 8:8f is easily misinterpreted if taken out of context. Many scholars have viewed 8:8f to be a unit in itself.<sup>100</sup> The effect of this is to leave the statement about the torah unqualified, giving it the appearance of a denunciation of the written law itself. However, there is a clear development of thought in vv. 4-9: the people refuse to repent or acknowledge that they have done wrong (vv. 4-5a); the people stubbornly reject Yahweh's demands (5b); thus the people are inferior to the wild animals, who instinctively do what they are supposed to do (7); this leads to the conclusion that the people do not know the תורת יהוה

<sup>99</sup>Hitzig, 1866, X, 87f; Giesebrecht, 1907, 68; Steuernagel, 568; H. Schmidt, 240f; Pfeiffer, 495; Anderson, 1984, 104f; D. R. Jones, 1992, 44, 182.

<sup>100</sup>Weiser, 1966, 70f; Leslie, 78; Fohrer, 1974, 158; Carroll, 1986, 228.



(7). In 8:8 we find an objection to this: "we are wise, we have Yahweh's תּוֹרָה!" Thus the supposition that *Stichworten* have resulted in the juxtaposing of vv. 4-7 and 8-9 is obviated.<sup>101</sup> While it has been suggested that vv. 4-7 address the people generally, and 8:8f address a specific group called the "wise," indicating two separate audiences,<sup>102</sup> the most likely setting of the piece suggests otherwise. The claim that the term חֲכָמִים here refers to a specific wisdom-circle is tenuous,<sup>103</sup> given that if it refers to a specific group, 8: 10-12 suggests that it is the priests and prophets (see below). There is no reason not to assume that this address was delivered in Jerusalem, since Jeremiah must have often spoken near the temple in Jerusalem, as this would always provide a larger crowd than anywhere else. The reference to torah, priests, and prophets accords with such a setting. Thus the response to the charge in 8: 4-7 which 8:8 presupposes (i.e. 'We are wise! We have the torah!'), was made by religious officials present in the larger audience. This suggests that vv. 4-9 are part of the same oracle.<sup>104</sup>

In LXX, 8: 10b-12, which appear also in 6: 13-15, are lacking. Many scholars have therefore regarded the former as out of place here.<sup>105</sup> However, there is no closer connection between 8:9 (or 10a) and 13 than between 8:12 and 13,<sup>106</sup> and while it has been suggested that there is again a change of audience, it was proposed above that the priests and prophets were part of a larger crowd present during the discourse. Thus the originality of 8: 10b-12 in its current context should be upheld,<sup>107</sup> and, given the reference to torah in 8:8, the oracular unit here should be regarded as 8: 4-12.<sup>108</sup>

A few comments on the text of 8:8f are in order. The expression עַם שָׂקֵר סִפְרִים is a "triple construct chain functioning as the subject" (cf. V).<sup>109</sup> Since the sentence is perfectly understandable this way, textual emendations designed to produce a double construct chain

<sup>101</sup>Pace Hyatt, 1956, 882; Rudolph, 1968, 61.

<sup>102</sup>Carroll, 1986, 228; Kelley, 132.

<sup>103</sup>Lindblom, 195f; McKane, 1965, 106f.

<sup>104</sup>Orelli, 1905, 52; Bright, 1965, 64f; Holladay, 1986, 276.

<sup>105</sup>Cornill, 1905, 118; H. Schmidt, 256 (ftn 1); Weiser, 1966, 72f; Holladay, 1986, 274.

<sup>106</sup>So Nägelsbach, 1871, 104; pace Duhm, 1901, 90.

<sup>107</sup>Condamin, 1936, 93; Nicholson, 1973, 88.

<sup>108</sup>Orelli, 1905, 52; Bright, 1965, 64f.

<sup>109</sup>The description of Holladay, 1986, 281, who nonetheless takes a different position.



(LXX, T) are to be rejected.<sup>110</sup> Some commentators would read MT's עָשָׂה as עָשָׂהּ, with תּוֹרַת יְהוָה as the object, or as the subject if the verb is given a passive sense (cf. LXX).<sup>111</sup> Given the position that will be taken below that לְשָׁקֶר means "in vain," the verb should be read as an absolute,<sup>112</sup> with עַם שֹׁקֵר סִפְרִים as the subject.

### 3. The Meaning of 8: 8-9.

The first issue involved in understanding 8:8f is the identity of the torah to which it refers. It has been proposed that what is denounced here are spurious, non-canonical writings embodying syncretistic practises,<sup>113</sup> various material from priests, prophets, or scribes falsely attributed to Yahweh,<sup>114</sup> or simply works of the false prophets.<sup>115</sup> However, spurious works are not intended here. The view that Josiah's reforms began in 628 makes it unlikely that Jeremiah would encounter officials at the temple who would defend such works. It is more likely that 8:8 involves Deuteronomy, which had gained official status in 622.

But the question remains as to whether Jeremiah denounces the torah itself. One proposal is that he denounces not the torah *per se*, but rather insertions made into the torah,<sup>116</sup> with some scholars identifying these as cultic regulations.<sup>117</sup> However, the issue of interpolation is tenuous, since Jeremiah would have to have had access to the copies available to the religious officials, and then compare them with an original exemplar. Another solution has been that Jeremiah is denouncing false interpretations and applications of torah.<sup>118</sup> While the torah may indeed have been misused, the context of 8:4ff indicates that Yahweh's demands, i.e. the stipulations found in the torah, are being ignored. Thus Jeremiah's accusation is that the people do not concern themselves

<sup>110</sup>Duhm, 1901, 88; McKane, 1986, 185, read the triple construct chain. Holladay, 1986, 274, 281 follows a double construct.

<sup>111</sup>Cornill, 1905, 117f; Rudolph, 1968, 60; McKane, 1986, 185.

<sup>112</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 54f; Volz, 1928, 76.

<sup>113</sup>S. R. Driver, 1900, 66; Torrey, 196ff.

<sup>114</sup>Jerome, Venema, 231f; Volz, 1928, 76f; Horst, 1923a, 116.

<sup>115</sup>Rashi, Graf, 1862, 133ff; Nägelsbach, 1871, 103.

<sup>116</sup>Blayney, 57; Orelli, 1905, 47f; von Rad, 102.

<sup>117</sup>Ball, 165ff; 176; Puukko, 148f; Skinner, 1948, 183f; Weiser, 1966, 72f.

<sup>118</sup>Bade, 86f; Granild, 147ff; Bright, 1965, 64f; Scharbert, 49ff.

with torah, not that they misuse it. Moreover, as will be discussed below, the issue here is not falsification.

The idea that Jeremiah is speaking of torah itself has produced three explanations which posit that Deuteronomy is being condemned. The first involves regarding 8:8 as indicating that Jeremiah was opposed to Deuteronomy from the beginning.<sup>119</sup> But this must be dismissed, not only because it requires a rejection of 11:1ff, but also because the context of 8:4ff suggests that the stipulations of torah are being disregarded. The latter is the charge being made here, not that the torah is false.

A second proposal is that of Hyatt, who maintains that תורת יהוה and דברי-יהוה are opposites, with the former denoting written, codified works, and the latter designating the spoken, prophetic word. Jeremiah is thereby rejecting the idea that Yahweh's will can be "crystallized" into a written format.<sup>120</sup> But Holladay notes that these two terms appear in Jer. 6:19 and Isa. 1:10 as parallels, which strongly supports the idea that they are parallels here in Jer. 8:8f. He also rightly cites the fact that Jer. 36, i.e. the account of the prophet's production of the *Urrolle*, indicates that Jeremiah was not opposed to producing a book of divine revelation.<sup>121</sup>

The third approach upholds 11:1ff by suggesting that Jeremiah originally supported Deuteronomy, but later came to reject it, either because of its cultic content,<sup>122</sup> or because following its introduction, the people developed a false sense of security based on external obedience to the law.<sup>123</sup> Several observations will show that this position is tenuous. First, it was earlier argued that Jeremiah was not opposed to the cult, and it is an unlikely speculation that Jeremiah originally overlooked cultic elements in Deuteronomy, but later condemned them. This imputes an unwarranted arbitrariness and inconsistency to a prophet who was perfectly willing to condemn outright that which he opposed. How can he condemn something as a fraud which he had publicly advocated, without acknowledging his own guilt? Secondly, while it is undoubtedly true that the ideas of Deuteronomy were

<sup>119</sup>Duhm, 1901, 82, 88f; Cornill, 1905, XXIX, 116, 143ff.

<sup>120</sup>Hyatt, 1941, 383ff; 1956, 780; 882. See also Weiser, 1966 72f; Carroll, 1981, 101ff; 1986, 229f.

<sup>121</sup>Holladay, 1986, 281f.

<sup>122</sup>Erbt, 138f; H. Schmidt, 256ff; Budde, 1926, 217ff.

<sup>123</sup>Marti, 1889, 18ff; Rudolph, 1968, 79f; Rowley, 1950, 173f; Anderson, 360.

misunderstood and distorted, Deuteronomy itself cannot be blamed for this, since it does not teach that the observation of external rituals compensates for moral and social failings. The error here lies on the part of those distorting the torah, i.e. with the people. This is valid for the reforms in general, i.e. it was the people who failed, not the reforms. Thus it is highly implausible that Jeremiah ever came to change his favourable attitude toward Deuteronomy.<sup>124</sup> Carroll has rightly noted that reform movements and revolutions often end up producing something very different than was originally intended.<sup>125</sup> When this occurs, it is certainly not the fault of the original ideals that produced the impetus for change. But it should also be noted that the context of 8:4ff indicates that there was no visible external obedience to the terms of Deuteronomy.

#### 4. Jer. 8:8 and the Meaning of: שֶׁקֶר/לְשָׁקֶר

The context provided by the unit 8: 4-12 has been cited above as significant. The people are in perpetual apostasy, committed to deceit, and refuse to change (vv. 4-5). No one repents, all go their own way (vs. 6). In fact, they are so bad that animals surpass them in doing what is expected of them (vs. 7). Even among the priests and prophets, greed and dishonesty has increased to such an extent that they no longer know how to be ashamed of their abominations (vv. 10-12). This is not the picture of a people upholding the terms of the Deuteronomic covenant. It is no surprise that the objection presupposed by 8:8 elicits dismay from Jeremiah. Understanding עֵשֶׂה שֶׁקֶר סִפְרִים as an absolute, with the triple construct chain עֵשֶׂה שֶׁקֶר סִפְרִים as the subject, לְשָׁקֶר is used adverbially. The usual understanding of שֶׁקֶר in 8:8 is "falseness, lie,"<sup>126</sup> with the resulting idea being that the scribes' pen has falsified the torah, or has produced entirely false products (see section VI. 3). However, given the fact that the terms of the covenant are fundamentally disregarded, a claim that the torah is false, or has been falsified, is unlikely. It is more plausible that the point being made is that the nation's apostasy nullifies the

<sup>124</sup>Robert, 16; von Rad, 106f; Cazalles, 1984, 110f.

<sup>125</sup>Carroll, 1981, 99.

<sup>126</sup>Duhm, 1901, 88; Skinner, 1948, 103; Weiser, 1966, 70f; Whybray, 22; McKane, 1986, 185.

advantage which possession of the torah affords. The Greek translator recognised this, rendering לְשָׁקֶר as εἰς μάτην ("in vain"), and several exegetes view שָׁקֶר in this passage as meaning "vain."<sup>127</sup> Using this translation for both occurrences of the word in 8:8 produces the sense: "the vain pen of the scribes has worked in vain." The viability of this meaning for שָׁקֶר is supported by other passages. לְשָׁקֶר means "vain" in 1 Sam. 25:21 (V: *frustra*), and in Jer. 3:23, where the *bamoth* cults are acknowledged to be worthless. In Jer. 10:14f; 16:19; and 51:17f שָׁקֶר describes idols, and is paralleled by לֹא־רוּחַ בָּם ("having no life"); אֵין־בָּם מוֹעִיל ("there is nothing of value in them"); and הֶבֶל ("vanity, useless"). Hab. 2:18f also uses it of idols, with parallels such as אֵין בְּקִרְבּוֹ ("they lack life"); and מַה־הוֹעִיל ("what good is it?"). In Exod. 5:9, LXX has recognised that דְּבַר־שָׁקֶר refers to "empty words" (ἐν λόγοις κενόις), whereas in Ps. 33:17, שָׁקֶר is used of horses, paralleled by לֹא יִמְלֹט ("it will not save"), and again means "vain." Finally, in Prov. 31:30, where a woman's charm and beauty is contrasted with her faith in Yahweh, שָׁקֶר is again paralleled by הֶבֶל, i.e. physical beauty is useless compared to faith. The meaning "vain, useless" for שָׁקֶר in Jer. 8:8 is thus supported by occurrences elsewhere (4x in Jeremiah), and accords well with the context: the nation does possess the torah, but by ignoring its demands, it becomes useless, i.e. its possession only provides an advantage if it is obeyed. Therefore 8:8 does not condemn Deuteronomy in any way, and is perfectly compatible with the position on Jer. 11: 1-14 taken earlier.

## VII. Jer. 31: 31-34 and the New Covenant.

While this passage is of great importance in Old Testament studies, a few comments about it will have to suffice. It is relevant here because the idea of a new covenant replacing the old covenant has implications for the position taken earlier, i.e. that Jeremiah's support for Deuteronomy did not change. The old covenant here is not to be seen as a Sinai covenant distinct from Deuteronomy.<sup>128</sup> The use of words like תּוֹרָה and בְּרִית suggest Deuteronomy as in Jer. 11: 1-8, and the statement that the people had broken the covenant

<sup>127</sup>Kimchi, Mezudath David, Henderson, 57; Pfeiffer, 495; Kaufmann, 42; Weinfeld, 1972, 160; 1976, 28.

<sup>128</sup>Pace Cornill, 1905, 348ff; Hyatt, 1941, 381ff; 1956, 1037f.



is reminiscent of 11:9ff. Finally, the connection drawn between the heart and torah is clearly a feature of Deuteronomy (Deut. 6:6; 11:18; 30:14).<sup>129</sup> The clear connection of the old covenant with Deuteronomy forced Duhm to reject the authenticity of the oracle, since the new covenant still upholds the old torah.<sup>130</sup> While some scholars simply attribute 31: 31-34 to the Deuteronomistic redactors,<sup>131</sup> Carroll notes that other texts associated with the latter do not mention a new covenant, prompting him to date the piece to the post-exilic period.<sup>132</sup> However, Cornill has noted that the emphasis on the heart (Jer. 4:4; 24:7), and the idea of one's spiritual state being written on it (17:1), provides a convincing basis for Jeremiah as the piece's originator.<sup>133</sup> The fact that the torah is Deuteronomy adequately explains the Deuteronomistic language,<sup>134</sup> and Jones notes that the combination of poetry and "high prose" found here was more conducive to the subject of the oracle than just poetry.<sup>135</sup> It has been suggested that the promise of a new covenant is a deliberate contrast to Deuteronomy,<sup>136</sup> or represents Jeremiah's later rejection of Deuteronomy.<sup>137</sup> But it must be noted that the torah here does not change, and the difference with the old covenant lies in the fact that the new covenant involves the internalisation of the torah, and therefore the internalisation of the covenant as defined in Deuteronomy. While failure has brought about the need for a new covenant, this failure lies purely on the part of a people who conspired against and broke the covenant (11:8ff). This is clear when one notes that under the old covenant, one had the choice to obey or not, and Jeremiah makes it clear elsewhere that the choice which was made was to disregard the covenant. In 31:31ff, the prophet has recognised that for the chosen nation to fulfil its covenantal obligations, divine intervention is necessary to create in men the "desire and ability" to obey.<sup>138</sup> Thus while it cannot be doubted that 31: 31-34 presupposes the failure of

<sup>129</sup>Duhm, 1901, 254ff; Thiel, 1981, 23ff.

<sup>130</sup>Duhm, 1901, 254ff.

<sup>131</sup>Nicholson, 1975, 70f; Thiel, 1981, 23ff; Herrmann, 1990, 49.

<sup>132</sup>Carroll, 1986, 610ff; cf. Mowinckel, 1913, 45ff.

<sup>133</sup>Cornill, 1905, 348ff.

<sup>134</sup>Holladay, 1989, 165, 198.

<sup>135</sup>D. R. Jones, 1992, 399ff.

<sup>136</sup>Potter, 350.

<sup>137</sup>H. Schmidt, 371f.

<sup>138</sup>Bright, 1966b, 197.



Josiah's attempt to restore the covenant in Deuteronomy,<sup>139</sup> it is the prophet's realisation that the failure is due to the people being unable and unwilling to live by that which he himself had wholeheartedly endorsed in 622. Therefore 31: 31-34 in no way represents a change in the prophet's attitude to Deuteronomy,<sup>140</sup> and in fact attests to his continued support for its basic ideas.

#### VIII. 22:13ff; Jeremiah's Assessment of Josiah.

##### 1. 22:13ff; Introduction and Unit Delineation.

Finally there is one last text which should be discussed here, since it represents Jeremiah's personal assessment of Josiah as a ruler. The relevant passage is Jer. 22:13ff, and it provides valuable evidence for supporting the idea that the prophet looked favourably upon the reform measures enacted by Josiah. Before briefly discussing the textual-critical aspects of 22:13ff, a few words can be said about unit delineation. 22:18f threaten Jehoiakim with his corpse remaining unburied, and this type of threat occurs also in 36:30, where Jeremiah holds out a similar fate to the king because he burned the prophet's scroll. Observations such as this, and, for example, the change in person and speaker in vv. 13-19, have led some scholars to divide this passage into smaller, originally separate, units.<sup>141</sup> However, there are indications that vv. 13-19 represent a single unit. Given the severity of the judgement pronounced in vv. 18f, it is fair to expect that the prophet would have given the reasons which prompted it. The latter are contained in vv. 13ff. It has been noted that the name of the king against whom the material is addressed is not provided until vs. 18, and that this may have been done intentionally to heighten the tension in a similar way to that in Nathan's parable.<sup>142</sup> Moreover, the use of יְהוֹיָכִים in vv. 13 and 18 links the two parts together. Thus those commentators who regard the unit to be vv. 13-19 are followed here.<sup>143</sup>

<sup>139</sup>Anderson, 394ff.

<sup>140</sup>Robert, 16; von Rad, 106f; D. R. Jones, 1992, 349ff.

<sup>141</sup>Duhm, 1901, 174, 176; H. Schmidt, 297f, 305f; Carroll, 1986, 427f.

<sup>142</sup>Drinkard, 309, 312.

<sup>143</sup>Graf, 1862, 291; Giesebrecht, 1907, 122; Hyatt, 1956, 982; Bright, 1965, 137f, 145; Holladay, 1986, 591ff; D. R. Jones, 1992, 289.

## 2. 22: 13-17; Textual-Criticism.

It was noted above that the unit is vv. 13-19. But as concerns Jeremiah's assessment of Josiah, only vv. 13-17 are relevant, and thus only those verses will be discussed here. It should also be said by way of introduction that MT presents a clear, understandable text in comparison to that of LXX. This is particularly true in vv. 15f, where the Septuagint reading is clearly inferior, as McKane has noted.<sup>144</sup>

In 22:13 LXX lacks an equivalent for הוֹי, and Cornill suggests that this is the original reading.<sup>145</sup> But since the unit is a woe oracle (vs. 18), and without הוֹי vs. 13 is an incomplete thought, MT should be retained. It has been noted by scholars that עָבַד + כֹּף means "to force to work."<sup>146</sup> Symmachus and Jerome emphasise the oppressive aspect of this in their translations: καταδουλοῦνται; *opprimet*. Finally, פָּעַל should be read in light of Job 7:2 with the sense of "wages."<sup>147</sup>

22:14 is more problematic. MT begins with הָאֶמֶר, indicating that Jehoiakim is being quoted. LXX lacks this word, and reads ὁκοδόμησας σεαυτῷ for אֶבְנָה לִי. This eliminates the quote and continues the accusation of vs. 13. The lack of הָאֶמֶר has been regarded as original by Duhm and Cornill.<sup>148</sup> But most scholars follow MT, and it can be said that the prophet sarcastically quoting the grandiose orders of Jehoiakim has a powerful effect. But the question remains as to how far the quote extends in vs. 14. The current pointing of וְקָרַע indicates that the Massoretes regarded the quote as including only 14a. Aquila, Targum, and Jerome read a participle (διορυσσῶν, also χριῶν for חָשַׁח; פָּצִים; *qui aperit*). This also ends the quote with 14a, and various commentators have adopted the latter view.<sup>149</sup> This would require either deleting לוֹ, or regarding it as referring to Jehoiakim. But if it is understood as referring to the building, and the verb קָרַע is pointed differently, the quote would extend to all of vs. 14. LXX has read a passive verb,

<sup>144</sup>McKane, 1986, 529.

<sup>145</sup>Cornill, 1905, 251, 252.

<sup>146</sup>Cornill, 1905, 252; Volz, 1928, 224.

<sup>147</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 200; McKane, 1986, 527.

<sup>148</sup>Duhm, 1901, 175; Cornill, 1905, 252.

<sup>149</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 122; Fohrer, 1974, 86; Holladay, 1986, 591.

and like all the verbs in 14b, converted them into the plural. This was done because the translator believed that the three final verbs referred to *עֲלִיּוֹת* ("chambers"). Thus *לוֹ* had to be deleted. LXX is right in expecting all three verbs to be the same tense, whereas MT reads a perfect, passive participle, and infinitive absolute. Some scholars would read three passive participles (cf. LXX).<sup>150</sup> This is opposed to the view of the majority of scholars who would convert the second verb (*סָפְּוּ*) into an infinitive absolute.<sup>151</sup> The solution taken here is to read three infinitive absolutes: *קָרַע; סָפְּוּ; בָּשְׂרוּ*, understood as imperatives, i.e. Jehoiakim giving orders. *לוֹ* is understood as referring to the building. Thus the conclusion is that the quote includes the whole of vs. 14.<sup>152</sup> The final problem in 14b is *חֲלֹנָיו*. The first person possessive suffix is unlikely to be right. Hitzig proposes that the Massoretes understood it as referring to Yahweh, i.e. Jehoiakim is installing windows similar to those in the temple.<sup>153</sup> At any rate, the proposals that it is either a dual form,<sup>154</sup> or an adjectival form ("full of windows")<sup>155</sup> are tenuous, and emendation is necessary. The most popular approach is to join to it the *vav* from the following word, producing a third person masculine suffix.<sup>156</sup> This is possible, but "its windows" is redundant in light of *לוֹ*. Schmidt suggests reading simply *חֲלֹנִים*, and this idea has been taken up by scholars who propose that it refers to a special Egyptian ceremonial window used for public appearances.<sup>157</sup> The best approach is that implied by LXX, Aquila, V, and T, and specifically suggested by Kimchi, i.e. reading *חֲלֹנִים*, which has been adopted by various commentators.<sup>158</sup> Otherwise, the word *מִרְוָהִים* has been seen to clash with the feminine noun *עֲלִיּוֹת*, and has led some scholars to replace the latter with an equivalent masculine noun.<sup>159</sup> A more realistic emendation is to read a nominal form: *מִרְוָהִים*.<sup>160</sup> But in reality, emendation is unnecessary, since the lack of

<sup>150</sup>Duhm, 1901, 175; McKane, 1986, 527f.

<sup>151</sup>Volz, 1928, 224; Bright, 1965, 137; Carroll, 1986, 426; Drinkard, 308.

<sup>152</sup>Skinner, 1948, 247; McKane, 527f.

<sup>153</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 163.

<sup>154</sup>Ewald, 1836, 230.

<sup>155</sup>Keil, 1986, 339.

<sup>156</sup>S. R. Driver, 1906, 129; Bright, 1965, 137; Holladay, 1986, 591.

<sup>157</sup>H. Schmidt, 298; Galling and Rösel, 80.

<sup>158</sup>Cornill, 1905, 253; McKane, 1986, 529.

<sup>159</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 122; Duhm, 1901, 175.

<sup>160</sup>Hölscher, 1914, 280; McKane, 1986, 527.

congruence in gender is fairly common. The participle was taken by Aquila and Symmachus (εὐρυχωρά), V (*spatiosus*), and T (כְּרוֹחַן) to mean "wide." LXX (ἀέριος) understands it as "airy." Kimchi suggests the meaning is both. In reality, all of these proposals are possible. בֵּית מְדוּחַ should be understood as "large house," given the parallel expression אֶשֶׁי מְדוּחַ in Num. 13:32, as Rashi and others have noted.<sup>161</sup>

In 22:15, the LXX presents an incomprehensible text. The problem began with בְּאֶרֶז מְתַחַרָה. The verbal form is odd, and has been pointed as a tiphel form of תַּחַר, which elsewhere occurs only in Jer. 12:5. Many scholars are satisfied with understanding a tiphel/taphel.<sup>162</sup> But Holladay is probably right to read a hithpael form (מְתַחַרָה).<sup>163</sup> Since the verb means "compete" in Jer. 12:5, the LXX had trouble with באֶרֶז, i.e. they expected the one with whom the king competes to follow the verb.<sup>164</sup> This prompted emending the text to read באֶחָז ("with Ahaz"), while some manuscripts read באֶחָב ("with Ahab"), and reading אֶבִּיד in connection with it. Aquila, Symmachus, V, and T also felt the need for an object, and thus understood אֶרֶז as symbolic of a king. Various scholars have followed either LXX reading,<sup>165</sup> whereas Hitzig simply deletes בְּאֶרֶז.<sup>166</sup> A reference to either king is less plausible than simply understanding מְתַחַרָה in the general sense "being zealous for,"<sup>167</sup> and with any connotation of competition being linked to vying with other kings in general, whether foreign or Hebrew.<sup>168</sup> Otherwise, LXX has two other main differences. The verbs אָכַל וְשָׁתָה have been converted into plural verbs, the subject of which is unclear. In MT, the subject of the singular verbs is אֶבִּיד, as also in the versions. Secondly, אֶזְטוֹב לוֹ has been moved, in the form וְטוֹב לוֹ, to follow וְשָׁתָה אָכַל. Then אֶזְטוֹב was omitted in vs. 16a. However, the Vulgate and Targum follow MT. Many exegetes opt for the reading in LXX,<sup>169</sup> but the general form of the Greek version of 22:15 militates against using it to emend MT at any point in the text. The statement "then

<sup>161</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 200.

<sup>162</sup>GKC§ 55h.

<sup>163</sup>Holladay, 1986, 592.

<sup>164</sup>Cornill, 1905, 253.

<sup>165</sup>Cheyne, 1888, 140; Volz, 1928, 224; Holladay, 1986, 592, 596.

<sup>166</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 164.

<sup>167</sup>Graf, 1862, 294; Cornill, 1905, 253.

<sup>168</sup>Thompson, 479; McKane, 1986, 530; D. R. Jones, 1992, 290.

<sup>169</sup>Cornill, 1905, 254f; Bright, 1965, 137.

it was well for him" in vs. 15 is more likely to relate to Josiah's doing that which was just and righteous, than to his eating and drinking. It is the moral and social failings of Jehoiakim which are being rebuked, and Josiah is the ideal figure because he upheld the moral and social demands of Yahweh. The clearly problematic nature of LXX 22:16a also prevents אָז מוֹכ from being deleted, as does its significance in the overall judgement of Josiah's reign being offered by Jeremiah. Thus MT should be followed.<sup>170</sup> The contrast between Jehoiakim and Josiah in vv. 15f is strengthened if הַתְּמִלֵּךְ is read as a hithpael, involving haplography of the second tav (הַתְּמִלֵּךְ).<sup>171</sup> The idea would be that while Josiah was a real king, Jehoiakim merely played at being a king.

In 22:16, LXX again transformed the verbs into plurals, leaving the subject unclear. The reading οὐκ ἔγνωσαν has nothing corresponding to it in MT. The corrections of Aquila and Symmachus are preferable. Volz and Fohrer regard vs. 16 as a gloss,<sup>172</sup> but there is nothing to support this. In fact, vs. 16 provides concrete examples of the claim in vs. 15, and should therefore be retained. Cornill regards vs. 17 as redactional, used to join two originally separate pieces together.<sup>173</sup> But it was earlier argued that vv. 13-19 are a single oracle. Thiel regards 17b to be Deuteronomistic because of its syntax.<sup>174</sup> But given the conclusion reached in chapter two of this study, the best explanation is that such expressions were simply common to the era of Jeremiah and Deuteronomy. 22:17 is necessary since one may expect a return to the condemnation of Jehoiakim before his punishment is pronounced (vv. 18f). Rashi notes that the juxtaposing of the roots עָשָׂק and רָצַץ appears elsewhere, and therefore there is no need to alter the reading here as some exegetes have proposed.<sup>175</sup> Aquila and Symmachus (δρομός) and V (*cursus*) understood מְרוֹצָה as derived from רָץ ("to run"). But LXX (φόνος) derives it from רָצַץ, and most scholars favour this root. Kimchi, linking the passage to

<sup>170</sup>Holladay, 1986, 592; McKane, 1986, 526; Drinkard, 308.

<sup>171</sup>Duhm, 1901, 175; Hölscher, 1914, 280; Holladay (reading an infinitive absolute), 1986, 591.

<sup>172</sup>Volz, 1928, 224; Fohrer, 1974, 86.

<sup>173</sup>Cornill, 1905, 255.

<sup>174</sup>Thiel, 1973, 241f.

<sup>175</sup>Pace Duhm, 1901, 176; Skinner, 1948, 247; Fohrer, 1974, 86.



Jehoiakim's mistreatment of his builders, suggests that it refers to the beatings inflicted upon them by the king.

### 3. The Date of 22:13ff.

The date of the oracle is not given. But it can be plausibly determined, despite its inclusion in a chapter comprised of oracles of different dates. The previous oracle in vv. 10-12 deals with Jehoahaz, the immediate successor of Josiah. The latter is "the dead one" mentioned in 22:10, not Jehoiakim.<sup>176</sup> Shallum was Jehoahaz's birth name (1 Chr. 3:15), and he was replaced with his brother Jehoiakim (Eliakim) by Necho II. The historical books do not refer to Jehoiakim's building activity. Nor is it absolutely clear as to what kind of construction was involved. The description of the structure, which suggests a luxury building, argues against the proposal that it involves military fortifications.<sup>177</sup> But it may involve either the building of a new palace,<sup>178</sup> or the renovation of the old one.<sup>179</sup> Targum and Kimchi allude to more than one building (בתי), but vv. 13f speak of only one house. The possibility that the building was outside Jerusalem has also been raised. Aharoni suggests that Jer. 22:13ff speaks of the fortress found during excavations at Ramat Rahel.<sup>180</sup> However, this is uncertain, since Yadin has identified this structure with a Baal temple built by Athaliah.<sup>181</sup> Holladay regards the punishment in 22:19, i.e. Jehoiakim's corpse being cast outside the gates of the city, as indicating that the building was also outside Jerusalem.<sup>182</sup> It is interesting that Kimchi connects the wide, ventilated chambers in 22:14 with use in the summer. Jer. 36:22 depicts Jehoiakim in his winter palace, and thus Jer. 22:13ff may be dealing with the building or renovating of a summer palace in Jerusalem. As concerns the date, Bennett sets the oracle in the period after

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<sup>176</sup>Pace Rashi and Kimchi.

<sup>177</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 162.

<sup>178</sup>H. Schmidt, 298; Welch, 1928, 138; Carroll, 1986, 427.

<sup>179</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 982; Clements, 133; D. R. Jones, 1992, 289.

<sup>180</sup>Yohanan Aharoni, 1961, 98, 112. He originally identified it with Uzziah's house of seclusion, but the evidence of a seal belonging to Eliakim, an official under Jehoiachin, caused him to change his position; see 1962, 50f, 59f.

<sup>181</sup>Yadin, 1978, 130ff.

<sup>182</sup>Holladay, 1986, 594.

Jehoiakim burnt Jeremiah's scroll.<sup>183</sup> However, the inability of Jehoiakim to pay his workers suggests the consequences of his tribute payment made when he was installed (2 Ki. 23: 33-35),<sup>184</sup> and the building work presupposes the peaceful years prior to the conflict with Nebuchadrezzar.<sup>185</sup> Jehoiakim may have undertaken the work in order to impress the people and consolidate his position as king, which he owed solely to the pharaoh. There is another consideration. Hitzig claims that this oracle was never delivered publicly, otherwise Jeremiah would have been executed.<sup>186</sup> But this is not necessarily true. If the oracle dates to the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, Jer. 26: 1-19 indicates that Jeremiah was not yet threatened by Jehoiakim. 26: 20-24 shows that at some point prior to 605, he was in danger from the king. Thus it may not have been until a few of years into his reign that Jehoiakim felt able to move against the opposition (e.g. Uriah). This would support the idea of scholars who have suggested that Jeremiah may have delivered the oracle at the site of the construction work.<sup>187</sup> Therefore those scholars are right who would date the oracle sometime within Jehoiakim's first three years.<sup>188</sup>

#### 4. The Significance of Jeremiah's Assessment of Josiah.

The most important element of 22:13ff is the view of Josiah expressed in it. It seems clear that יְהוֹשִׁיָּהּ in 22:15 refers to Josiah. The implication that it denotes Ahaz or Ahab (i.e. LXX) is unlikely. Neither of these kings would be praised in the manner of 22:15f, and the Greek translators recognised this, consequently being forced to alter the rest of the passage. Giesebrecht maintains that it is Solomon, since he too was an avid builder.<sup>189</sup> He also carried out elaborate construction work, utilising the large number of conscripted workers mentioned in 1 Ki. 5:27ff. In 1 Ki. 12:4, the Northern tribes demanded that Rehoboam lighten the harsh demands of Solomon if they were to recognise his accession. He

<sup>183</sup>Bennett, 1895, 64f.

<sup>184</sup>Holladay, 1986, 594.

<sup>185</sup>D. R. Jones, 1992, 289.

<sup>186</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 162.

<sup>187</sup>Skinner, 1948, 248; Volz, 1928, 225; Hopper, 983.

<sup>188</sup>Duhm, 1901, 174; H. Schmidt, 298; Leslie, 121.

<sup>189</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 122.

refused, and Jeroboam I, the former overseer of the labourers from the tribe of Joseph (1 Ki. 11:28), was established as king of Northern Israel. But given Solomon's reputation as a religious apostate, he could not have served as the ideal model with which to contrast Jehoiakim. Targum reads *כְּמֶלֶךְ קִדְמָא*, which Rabbinical tradition relates to David.<sup>190</sup> This involves the translation "like the first king." But Hayward translates T as "like the former king,"<sup>191</sup> which would suggest Josiah. The fact that 22:10 indicates that even after three months, and therefore at the beginning of Jehoiakim's reign, Josiah was still lamented, argues in favour of identifying *אֲבִיךָ* as Josiah. Moreover, while one could refer to any of Jehoiakim's royal ancestors as his "father," the fact that no specific king is named suggests Josiah.

The question remains as to whether one can interpret what is said about Josiah in 22: 15b-16 as indicating support for his reforms. Many scholars have noted that Josiah is not praised here for his religious reforms.<sup>192</sup> Conversely, Jehoiakim is not condemned for religious apostasy. Thus one might conclude that the oracle cannot be used to support the supposition that Jeremiah supported the reforms, only that he admired Josiah's social and moral principles. But Skinner and Albertz have rightly noted that the principles praised are those of Deuteronomy.<sup>193</sup> In 22:16a Jeremiah claims that under Josiah, "things were good" (*אֵין טוֹב*). In 22:15b we read *אֵין טוֹב לִי*, i.e. referring specifically to Josiah. But *לִי* is lacking in 22:16a, and Holladay asks whether this indicates that Jeremiah viewed the reign of Josiah as good in general.<sup>194</sup> Keil and Drinkard rightly answer this in the affirmative,<sup>195</sup> since without *לִי*, the expression must be understood as relating to the whole scope of life under Josiah.

But two other observations can be made. First, it must be acknowledged that cultic matters are not explicitly mentioned. Some scholars have sought to introduce such an aspect, suggesting that *אָכַל וְשָׁתָה* in vs. 15 refers to participation in a covenant meal

<sup>190</sup>Kimchi; see also McKane, 1986, 530.

<sup>191</sup>Hayward, 108.

<sup>192</sup>Duhm, 1901, 175f; Puukko, 135; Scharbert, 48.

<sup>193</sup>Skinner, 1948, 248; Albertz, 1994, 198.

<sup>194</sup>Holladay, 1986, 596.

<sup>195</sup>Keil, 1986, 340; Drinkard, 310, 312.

similar to that supposedly found in Exod. 24:11.<sup>196</sup> But as McKane notes, there is nothing in the oracle to support this interpretation.<sup>197</sup> The lack of a reference to cultic matters is due to the fact that the cause of the condemnation is very specific, dealing with Jehoiakim's policy of forcing men to work on his palace without paying them. The issue is the king's treatment of his fellow men, and thus Josiah's religious reforms are not specifically relevant to the charge made against Jehoiakim. But there is another observation to be made here. As Bright has noted, if Jeremiah had originally opposed, or later came to oppose, the reforms, that is he regarded the reforms as a mistaken policy which only made the situation worse, it is unlikely that he would have made the comparison at all.<sup>198</sup> The one responsible for the reforms and Deuteronomy was Josiah, and if Jeremiah opposed this, he was in opposition to Josiah. If the king's religious policy worked counter to Jeremiah's goals, then Josiah worked counter to the aims of Jeremiah. Since the latter considered his own goals to be those of Yahweh, Josiah would then have been in direct opposition to the will of the God of Israel. Jeremiah condemned various kings on different occasions without holding out an ideal predecessor as a contrast, and he could have done so in 22:13ff as well. It is therefore more plausible to see in this oracle Jeremiah's endorsement of the basic policies of Josiah, including the reforms.<sup>199</sup>

This conclusion about Jeremiah's own view of Josiah accords with the conclusions reached earlier in this chapter, i.e. that the prophet basically supported the program of reforms carried out by the king, but nonetheless looked beyond the external changes, seeking to determine whether the return to Yahweh extended into the hearts and minds of the people of Judah.

## IX. Conclusions.

The conclusions which can be drawn from this chapter effectively negate the validity of two objections to the idea that Jeremiah began his prophetic career in 627, as presented in chapter

<sup>196</sup>Hopper, 1956, 985; D. R. Jones, 1992, 290.

<sup>197</sup>McKane, 1986, 530.

<sup>198</sup>Bright, 1965, XCII.

<sup>199</sup>Skinner, 1948, 248; Thompson, 479; Herrmann, 1990, 13, 33; Drinkard, 312.



three. The first such objection is that if Jeremiah had really been active since that time, then the delegation charged by Josiah in 622 with obtaining a prophetic response to Deuteronomy's appearance would have consulted him, and not Huldah. It was stressed that the general lack of further information about Huldah does not support the conclusion that she was an obscure figure, since she may well have been a significant prophetic character in Jerusalem. Moreover, it must be remembered that a prophet required time, and above all, the confirmation of his basic message, for his personal standing and repute to become sufficiently advanced to merit consultation by society's highest authorities. Jeremiah did not have either of these aspects associated with his name in 622. The second objection is that Jeremiah does not mention, or take a position on, the reforms of Josiah. While it was concluded that the evidence simply does not exist to regard Jeremiah as officially involved in the reforms, unofficial participation on his part is demonstrable, and a clear position on that element unique to Josiah's reformation, i.e. the appearance of Deuteronomy in 622, is attested. Texts such as 6:16ff and 7:21ff, which were shown not to reject the sacrificial cult *per se*, but rather the relevant contexts clearly indicate a rejection of cultic piety cultivated by people unconcerned with Yahweh's moral and social demands, should not be regarded as relevant to Jeremiah's attitude toward Deuteronomy or the reforms. However, 11: 1-14 is clearly pertinent. This text was shown to contain two units separated chronologically by thirteen years. 11: 1-8 reflects the prophet's enthusiastic response to the public presentation of Deuteronomy in 622. This was followed by his public activity throughout Judah on behalf of the terms of this law book. On the other hand, 11:9ff presents Jeremiah's perception that the religious reaction which set in after Josiah's death represented a conspiracy against the covenant renewed in 622. The important passage 8:8f was shown to express the prophet's reaction to the objectionable idea that possession of this torah was sufficient to qualify the people as wise, regardless of the fact that their lives betrayed a remarkable disregard for the demands of that torah. Such a situation completely eliminates the advantages of possessing torah, and it becomes useless, a mere book. Thus 8:8f should not be regarded as criticism of Deuteronomy or Josiah's policies, but rather as a denunciation of the distortion and perversion of the principles



underlying these. The proclamation of a new covenant (31: 31-34) reveals that Jeremiah did not change his position on Deuteronomy. But he did come to realise that the people were unable and unwilling to live by the covenantal terms it sets forth, and thus direct intervention on Yahweh's part within the hearts of the people was necessary if they were ever to live in accordance with the demands of their God. Therefore, unlike the scenario involving Isaiah and Hezekiah's reforms, Jeremiah both spoke out in reference to Josiah's attempt to make Deuteronomy the standard of the nation's life, and unofficially supported the best opportunity presented thus far to bring about a real, spiritual return to Yahweh. Finally, the prophet's basic support for the reform program of Josiah was shown to be intrinsic to the oracle found in 22:13ff, where Jeremiah praises the reforming king's reign, and uses it as the standard by which to judge the actions of Jehoiakim.

# CHAPTER 7

## JEREMIAH AND THE ISSUE OF PROPHETIC SILENCE

### I. Introduction.

Another important objection made by some scholars to Jeremiah beginning to prophesy in 627 is that for many commentators taking the traditional view, a period of silence is often assigned to Jeremiah. The apparent lack of any material dating to the period 622-609 is understood to reflect a period of silence during which the prophet did not appear publicly. This would reflect approximately thirteen years during which Jeremiah was not exercising his public prophet calling. As noted in chapter three, several scholars object to this idea, and by lowering the beginning of the prophet's career to 609 or 605, this period of silence is obviated, and Jeremiah can accordingly be seen as exercising his prophetic office without interruption.

As was the case with the other objections to the 627 date, the validity of an objection to a period of silence on Jeremiah's part is questionable. The subject will be approached by looking at six aspects: the prophetic office itself and the issue of earning a living, the parallel offered by the prophet Isaiah, the implications of Jer. 25:3, the reason why Jeremiah might withdraw in silence, understanding chapters 2-6 in light of the period 627-622, and whether this period of silence was absolute.

## II. The Prophetic Office and Earning a Living.

It can be said that in itself, a period of silence on the part of a prophet such as Jeremiah is not only acceptable, it is also inevitable. This is probably the case with all of the great prophets, since they are never depicted as receiving payment for their prophecies, and even the spiritual giants of Israel needed to earn a living like anyone else. While certain texts clearly demonstrate that some prophets and seers were paid for their services (1 Sam. 9:7; Ezek. 13:19), it is highly improbable that anyone would pay a prophet like Jeremiah for the type of oracles he delivered. Amos made it clear that serving as Yahweh's messenger was not an occupation. He denied being a נָבִיא (Amos 7:14), stating that he was merely a farmer (בֹּקֵר; בֹּלֵם שִׁקְמִים; lit. "a herdsman" and "a tender of Sycamore trees") who had a message from Yahweh. Thus Amos probably only delivered oracles occasionally, when the agricultural cycle permitted.

Jeremiah never indicates his occupation, but in 32:7ff, he is able to produce seventeen shekels of silver to buy his cousin's field in Anathoth. Duhm notes that Jeremiah would have to have had a source of income to live in Jerusalem, and while he views Jeremiah primarily as a poet or lyricist,<sup>1</sup> Jeremiah would not have earned any income from this. It was noted in chapter six that no evidence exists that he ever functioned as a cultic prophet or official priest. The same can be said in relation to the proposal that Jeremiah was an official counsellor under Josiah.<sup>2</sup> Given that most of humanity in the pre-industrial era worked in agriculture, Volz is probably right to see Jeremiah as involved in farming.<sup>3</sup> This is consistent with the observation that Jeremiah's oracles reveal a deep fondness for nature.<sup>4</sup> At any rate, it is more than plausible that individuals like Amos and Jeremiah, who also needed the means to obtain the necessities of life, delivered oracles whenever the agricultural cycle permitted. Thus it is quite reasonable that there would regularly be gaps in Jeremiah's public appearances. Some of these gaps might

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<sup>1</sup>Duhm, 1901, XI, 56; 1922, 244.

<sup>2</sup>Pace Harrelson, 270.

<sup>3</sup>Volz, 1928, XIV.

<sup>4</sup>Hölscher, 1914, 269; H. Schmidt, 273; Pfeiffer, 512; Weiser, 1966, XIV.

be fairly long, but it is fair to ask whether there is precedent for such a long period of silence as that assumed for Jeremiah (i.e. thirteen years). Once again it will be worth looking briefly at the prophet Isaiah.

### III. The Issue of Silence and the Prophet Isaiah.

#### 1. Introduction.

In chapter five the prophet Isaiah was discussed, and it was noted that when it comes to the issue of a prophet's position in relation to contemporary reform measures, there is a considerable difference between the way Isaiah scholars handle this matter, and those studying Jeremiah. A similar situation arises here, since many exegetes maintain at least one period of silence on Isaiah's part, when the prophet withdrew from public activity. Earlier commentators, noting the apparent lack of material from Jotham's reign, proposed that Isaiah remained silent between the time of his call and the end of Jotham's reign,<sup>5</sup> producing a period of roughly sixteen years. However, this is to be rejected because it presupposes a sixteen year reign for Jotham between Azariah and Ahaz, and the chronological impossibility of this is well-known. But it is notable that the length of this suggested period of silence is comparable to that often attributed to Jeremiah.

#### 2. Isa. 8: 16-18, and the Issue of Silence During Isaiah's Career.

The most important argument in favour of a period of silence in Isaiah's career involves Isa. 8: 16-18. It should be noted from the outset that the Hebrew text for this passage is very straightforward, and the Vulgate provides a very good translation. This cannot be said of the Septuagint, which either had a different *Vorlage*, or had difficulty understanding the Hebrew. It is an inferior text, and it is little wonder that οἱ ῥεῖς have emended it.<sup>6</sup> Thus MT is followed here. But a few comments on textual matters would be helpful. In 8:16, צוֹר is an imperative,<sup>7</sup> rather than an infinitive,<sup>8</sup> given the fact

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<sup>5</sup>Knobel, XIII; Nägelsbach, 1878, 4.

<sup>6</sup>See Ziegler, 1939, 152f.

<sup>7</sup>GKC §67n; BK iii, 990.

that the parallel word (תַּלְמִידִים) is an imperative. The word לְמוֹד, found also in Isa. 50:4 and 54:13, should be understood here as "disciples."<sup>9</sup> The speaker was understood by LXX and T to be Yahweh, but clearly Isaiah is the speaker in 8:17, suggesting that he is also the speaker in 8:16, and is ordering a small group of followers to write up and seal his prophecies until they are fulfilled.

It has often been understood that this passage indicates Isaiah's withdrawal from public activity after Ahaz rejected his advice not to seek Assyrian intervention in the Syro-Ephramitic war. This period of withdrawal then lasted until some time up to Hezekiah's reign.<sup>10</sup> The length of this period of relative silence varies in relation to the different chronological positions taken on the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah. For many the silence was not absolute, but it is nonetheless maintained that the book of Isaiah reflects *little* activity over a considerable period of time: 30 years,<sup>11</sup> 22 years,<sup>12</sup> 20 years.<sup>13</sup> Wildberger's idea that Isaiah appeared occasionally over a long period of time<sup>14</sup> is consistent with the observations made in section II above. Thus a long period of *substantial* silence on Isaiah's part, accepted by much of Isaiah scholarship, provides a satisfactory precedent for a similar scenario with Jeremiah.<sup>15</sup>

#### IV. Jer. 25:3 and a Time of Silence.

The statement made in 25:3 is relevant at this stage, since Jeremiah specifically refers to a twenty-three year span over which he has been a prophet. The question of the authenticity of 25:1ff was addressed in chapter four, where it was concluded that 25:1ff is original, although MT has been expanded. Fortunately, both LXX and MT attest the reference to Josiah's thirteenth year, and the claim that Jeremiah had been a prophet for twenty-three years. However, the Septuagint has rendered מִן־שָׁלֹשׁ עָשָׂרָה שָׁנָה ("from the thirteenth year") as ἐν τρισκαιδεκάτῳ ἔτει ("in the thirteenth year"). But the

<sup>8</sup>Pace Duhm, 1892, 62; G. B. Gray, 1912, 155; Rignell, 1957, 47.

<sup>9</sup>Kapelrud, 576ff; D. R. Jones, 1955/6, 233 (note 34).

<sup>10</sup>Sellin, 1923, 129; Porteous, 1959, 599; Wildberger, 1972, 344; 1982, 1553, 1579, 1582; Albertz, 1994, 325 (note 42).

<sup>11</sup>Steuernagel, 507.

<sup>12</sup>G. B. Gray, 1912, lxxi.

<sup>13</sup>Duhm, 1922, 159.

<sup>14</sup>Wildberger, 1982, 1579.

<sup>15</sup>So Harrelson, 260.



following ער, correctly rendered as ἔως in LXX, supports the reading נ over ב, and it is likely that the Greek reading has been influenced from 1:2.<sup>16</sup> At any rate, many scholars have understood this reference to a twenty-three year span as precluding a substantial period of silence on Jeremiah's part.<sup>17</sup> While this passage could be understood as indicating continual prophetic activity over twenty-three years, another explanation is plausible, i.e. Jeremiah here refers to the span of time during which he has been the spokesman of Yahweh. If he had been silent at times, this does not change the fact that he was still Yahweh's prophet. He had been receiving the word of Yahweh and speaking it whenever he received it, over a twenty-three year period, but not continually during this time. The expression וְהָשִׁיבָם וְדָבַר, <sup>18</sup> which Weippert maintains is characteristic of the prose in Jeremiah and therefore is not to be denied to the prophet,<sup>19</sup> has often been understood as denoting 'frequency,'<sup>20</sup> or 'tirelessness,'<sup>21</sup> which might argue against a substantial period of silence. But it should also be noted that the root שָׁב is frequently used with דָּבַר, indicating the idea of rising early in the morning. This suggests the ideas of 'diligence,' 'commitment,' and 'responsibility,' i.e. taking one's task very seriously, or as Binns suggests, making the relevant action the "chief object" of attention.<sup>22</sup> Thus the idea would be 'earnestness,'<sup>23</sup> rather than continual, uninterrupted action, indicating the seriousness with which Jeremiah pronounced Yahweh's word whenever he received it. It can therefore be concluded that 25:3 does not preclude a period of silence during Jeremiah's career.

## V. The Reason for Jeremiah's Withdrawal after 622.

The question still remains as to the reason for this period of silence. The discussion in chapter four excludes the explanation

<sup>16</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 158.

<sup>17</sup>Binns, xxx; Condamin, 1936, 66; Bright, 1981, 323 (ftn. 5); Rietzschel, 135.

<sup>18</sup>MT's וְהָשִׁיבָם is probably a scribal error caused by the three preceeding words beginning with aleph (so Rudolph, 1968, 158), rather than an Aramaism (*pace* Holladay, 1986, 662).

<sup>19</sup>Weippert, 1973, 125f, *pace* Thiel, 1973, 133; Bartelmus, 1331.

<sup>20</sup>Rashi, BDB, 1014; Thompson, 289, 511.

<sup>21</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 158; Weippert, 1973, 125.

<sup>22</sup>Binns, 189.

<sup>23</sup>GKC §113L; König, 1922, 500.

that the failure of "Scythian" oracles produced this result.<sup>24</sup> But several scholars have taken the view that Jeremiah actually withdrew prior to 622 because of frustration with a lack of response to his message, appearing only infrequently during Josiah's post-622 reign.<sup>25</sup> It has also been proposed that Jeremiah became silent because he was unsure about what to make of the developments in 622.<sup>26</sup> However, neither approach is satisfactory, partly for reasons already cited. The interpretation of 11: 1-8 adopted in chapter six indicates that Jeremiah was not silent in 622, and in fact came out publicly in support of Deuteronomy. It should also be noted that frustration with a lack of success is highly unlikely to have caused Jeremiah to withdraw. Jer. 20:9 clearly expresses the desire to do just this, but also the irresistible compulsion to speak Yahweh's word, which overwhelmed the impulse to quit. Puukko maintains that after becoming silent in 622 because of uncertainty about Deuteronomy, he finally expressed his opposition to the reforms in 7: 1-15.<sup>27</sup> Besides the view of 11: 1-8 taken earlier, it must be said that this assessment of 7:1ff is tenuous. While it is undeniable that the latter oracle presupposes a false trust in the temple according to which cultic zeal was believed to compensate for blatant immorality, Deuteronomy cannot be blamed for this. The scenario in 7:1ff is the result of a gross distortion of Deuteronomy, and the assertion<sup>28</sup> that the cultic law is the most important element of that covenant document is to be rejected. Seidl's analysis of 7:1ff indicates that this oracle denounces the people's disregard for the ethical demands of the torah, and is in fact in accordance with the aims of Deuteronomy.<sup>29</sup>

A more plausible explanation for Jeremiah's withdrawal in 622 would be satisfaction with the events of that year.<sup>30</sup> But this requires qualification, since it is unlikely that Jeremiah simply believed that Yahweh's demands had been met. Procksch rightly notes that after Deuteronomy's appearance, Jeremiah would have to

<sup>24</sup>Pace Cornill, 1905, XXVII, 85f.

<sup>25</sup>Scharbert, 46, 54ff; Fohrer, 1970, 391; 1974, 51, 81; W. Schmidt, 240.

<sup>26</sup>Kittel, 1925, 415 (ftn. 2); Puukko, 149ff; Fohrer, *ibid*.

<sup>27</sup>Puukko, 149ff.

<sup>28</sup>Made by Puukko, 140.

<sup>29</sup>Seidl, 149 (& ftm. 44), 153, 157f, 174f.

<sup>30</sup>Volz, 1928, XIV; Rudolph, 1968, IV, 50f, 79f; Thiel, 1973, 59; Soggin, 1976, 284.

have waited to see what would result.<sup>31</sup> Since the prophet offered the possibility of averting judgement if true repentance was forthcoming, and if the publication of Deuteronomy provided an opportunity for this, the passage of considerable time would be required before Jeremiah could decide whether the opportunity had been utilised. First the people would have to become familiar with the torah, and then time would be necessary to produce a change in the way they lived. Since Deuteronomy may have become somewhat fashionable after its publication, time would be required to determine whether the reaction to it would endure.

Finally, it should be said that Deuteronomy did offer the opportunity for real repentance. Before 622, the reforms of Josiah were predominately cultic. But in that year, the king endorsed a code which not only made stringent moral and social demands, but also advocated circumcision of the heart (Deut. 10:16). Jeremiah makes the same demand in 4:3f, where he combines it with a statement from Hos. 10:12 which also calls for inward renewal. This suggests a clear agreement between Jeremiah and Deuteronomy on the nature of the relationship between Yahweh and the nation. In fact, Deut. 6:5 demands that the people love (אָהַב) Yahweh, and this admonition appears frequently in Deuteronomy: 6:5; 10:12; 11:1; 13:4; and 30:16, 20, being linked with the fortunes of the nation: 11:13ff, 22ff; and 19:9f. But it is equally important that it is categorically stated that Yahweh loves (אָהַב) His people: 4:37; 5:10; 7:8, 13; 10:15; and 23:6. Jeremiah states this twice in 31:3. As concerns the people loving Yahweh, Jer. 13:11 uses the word דָּבַק ("cling") to describe this, which is also used in Deut. 11:22 and 30:20 along with אָהַב. The fact that Deuteronomy places such great importance on an internal relationship with Yahweh based on love, and requires that one's heart be directed toward Him, makes it clear that Jeremiah's demand for inward spiritual renewal is equally shared by Deuteronomy.<sup>32</sup> Von Rad rightly notes that both Jeremiah and Deuteronomy require a "spiritualised moral worship," and Albertz correctly sees in Deut. 6:5 the demand for the "internalization of the relationship with God."<sup>33</sup> Thus it can be concluded that Jeremiah saw in Deuteronomy the opportunity for

<sup>31</sup>Procksch, 1902, 82.

<sup>32</sup>Pace Puukko, 151f; Scharbert, 56f.

<sup>33</sup>Von Rad, 105; Albertz, 1994, 208.

true repentance to take root among the people, and his relative silence after 622 (see section IX) is adequately explained by his approval of the covenant document, and his need to wait and see whether this opportunity was utilised.

## VI. The Cultic Reforms of 628-622 and Jer. 2-6.

There are still three texts which scholars have linked to the question of Jeremiah's position on the reforms and Deuteronomy which require discussion: 3: 6-11; 5:1ff; and 6: 27-30. But before discussing these passages, a few observations need to be made about how Jeremiah's activity in the years 627-622 can be understood. It was noted in chapter three that one of the objections to the prophet becoming active in 627 is the claim that no texts can be dated with *certainty*, at the earliest, before 622. But it must be said that many texts *can* be read in light of the period 627-622,<sup>34</sup> and the general lack of indications of date is a problem in many of the prophetic books. A comprehensive examination of the relevant oracles in Jeremiah is beyond the limitations of this study, but an attempt should be made to demonstrate how one set of material, chapters 2-6, is consistent with the years 627-622.

In looking at Jer. 2-6, a few general observations can be made. Several scholars have noted that much of this material could be dated to various settings,<sup>35</sup> while others would place much of it in Josiah's reign generally.<sup>36</sup> However, the key issue of the chronology of Josiah's reforms requires that the material be explained against this background, since this determines the significance of the prophet's message. Many who follow the idea that the reforms did not begin until 622, would date much in Jer. 2-6 to the period 627-622.<sup>37</sup> This approach is straightforward, placing two sets of material, 2:1-4:2, which deals with syncretism and idolatry, and 4:3ff, which focuses on the foe from the north and moral apostasy, in a pre-reform setting. But the position taken earlier is that the

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<sup>34</sup>Cf. Carroll, 1986, 91, who nonetheless rejects a period of activity under Josiah.

<sup>35</sup>Neumann, 278ff, 327f; Carroll, 1986, 57, 65, 91; McKane, 1986, lxxxviii-xcii.

<sup>36</sup>Graf, 1862, XXIV, 15; Giesebrecht, 1907, 6, 30, 38; Hertzberg, 598; Herrmann, 1987, 570, 580; 1990, 105ff.

<sup>37</sup>Cornill, 1905, XIIIff, XXVI; Nötscher, 1f, 7; Rietzschel, 131, 136; Rudolph, 1968, IIIff, XIX, 1, 4, 13, 25ff, 43, 45, 50f; Haag, 1973, 37; Scharbert, 41ff; R. M. Paterson, 200ff.



reforms began in 628, and thus Jeremiah was not active in the pre-reform era. Nonetheless, Jer. 2-6 can be understood against the background of the cultic reforms of 628-622.

Several scholars who have accepted the Chronicler's chronology have viewed Jeremiah's preaching in 627-622 as a criticism of the contemporary situation. This may involve either a criticism of the reforms themselves or the people's response,<sup>38</sup> or the idea that Josiah's reform measures had failed.<sup>39</sup> Others propose that Jeremiah originally came out in support of Josiah's reforms.<sup>40</sup> The position taken here is that both views are correct to a certain degree, as long as Jeremiah's dissatisfaction, and any "failure," is held to be with the people's response, not the reforms themselves. It should be stated that the period 627-622 can be divided into two distinct stages. In the first, approval for Josiah's cultic measures prompted Jeremiah's denunciations of idolatry (2:1-4:2). By the second stage, the cultic reforms had not led to a change in personal morality and social behaviour, causing Jeremiah to attack this new scenario. This is consistent with the focus on moral and social issues in 4:3-6:30, reflecting a shift in emphasis from the issue of syncretistic religion (2:1-4:2).

It has long been noted that Jeremiah would have supported the elimination of idolatry and syncretism.<sup>41</sup> It is highly improbable that he would have opposed the removal of the *bamoth*, given the deep-rooted syncretistic tendencies of the cults there.<sup>42</sup> Nor would he have opposed the strong cultic aspect of these reforms, since he did not reject the cult.<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, the environment created in Jerusalem elevated the status of Yahweh and repudiated the claims of all other deities. This emphasis on Yahweh produced a situation in which Jeremiah's message would be more likely to be taken seriously than one in which the prerogatives of other gods were still valid. But an important consideration is the fact that reforms implemented on an official level would have to be justified to the

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<sup>38</sup>Hitzig, 1866, IXff, 7f, 22ff, 31; Nägelsbach, 1871, 4, 44, 47, 50, 59f, 70; Clements, 4, 15, 24; Fohrer, 1970, 56; 1974, 51, 79ff.

<sup>39</sup>Cheyne, 1888, 15-58; G. A. Smith, 1923, 89; Milgrom, 1955, 68f (ftn. 25).

<sup>40</sup>Hengstenberg, 496f, 506f; Ball, 6, 15ff; 97, 108f, 113, 117, 132, 140, 142ff; Thompson, 18f, 51, 56, 60f, 98f, 234ff, 249f.

<sup>41</sup>Hölscher, 1914, 279; Leslie, 93; Bright, 1965, XCI.

<sup>42</sup>Pace Duhm, 1922, 257.

<sup>43</sup>Pace Fohrer, 1970, 390f.



masses to be successful.<sup>44</sup> Jeremiah's polemic against idolatry and syncretism would give moral credibility and support to the official actions. It should also be remembered that the elimination of such deeply ingrained practices would require time, and thus there would still be contemporary cultic apostasy to denounce.<sup>45</sup> But as this eventually diminished, the prophet came to be all the more aware of the moral and social apostasy which had not changed. Consequently, he directed his prophetic message at this aspect, which was more prominent once syncretism and idolatry had faded. In 5:1-6:30 he reveals this stunning failure to return to Yahweh with the whole heart. But this was not Josiah's fault, nor his failure. By purifying the nation's external religion, he was taking responsibility for that sphere over which he had control, while Jeremiah confronted the people directly on a grass-roots level. Thus king and prophet were functioning on two different, but complementary levels,<sup>46</sup> with Jeremiah seeking to extend the external reform to inward renewal.<sup>47</sup> The appearance of Deuteronomy in 622 would enable Josiah to place state authority behind an attempt to emend the moral and social state of Judah. For Jeremiah, this offered a substantial opportunity to address the situation he confronted during the second stage of his activity in 627-622.

## VII. 3: 6-11

### 1. Textual-Criticism, Unit Delineation, and Authenticity.

Fortunately, the textual-critical issues in 3: 6-11 are relatively minor, and do not affect the meaning. It should be noted that אֲחִיקָם in 3:10, which is lacking in LXX and seems to suggest that Northern Israel, rather than Judah, is the subject of 3:9, is a gloss from 3:7.<sup>48</sup> Otherwise there are no significant textual difficulties. Equally straightforward is the matter of unit delineation. 3: 6-11 is a prose discourse situated between two poetic units, i.e. 3: 1-5 and 12-13,

<sup>44</sup>Keil, 1986, 12, 23; Lundbom, 1993, 85, 89.

<sup>45</sup>Bright, 1965, XC; Nicholson, 1973, 4; Thompson, 97f, 166, 186.

<sup>46</sup>Lundbom, 1993, 89.

<sup>47</sup>Keil, 1986, 12, 49.

<sup>48</sup>S. R. Driver, 1906, 16; Fohrer, 1974, 76.

and has its own superscription. This suggests that it has been inserted in its current position secondarily. The question of continuity between 3: 1-5 and other poetry in chapter 3 has been answered differently. On the one hand, it has been suggested that either 3:19,<sup>49</sup> or vv. 12-13,<sup>50</sup> represent the continuation of 3:5. On the other hand, Condamin proposes that 3: 1-5 does not have a continuation, but rather 3:6ff serves as a preamble to the material which follows.<sup>51</sup> In any case, 3: 6-11 should be viewed as a distinct oracle originally separate from its current milieu. Its authenticity has often been doubted. It was noted in chapter three that many scholars who reject any activity on Jeremiah's part during the reign of Josiah reject the authenticity of the reference to Josiah's reign in 3:6a. While this was dismissed, it can be said that the rejection of the superscription does not necessitate the same judgement for the whole unit. But in the discussion which follows, the Josianic setting required by 3:6a will be shown to be important. Rejection of the Jeremianic origin of 3: 6-11 tends to be based on the prose format, and the suspicion that the piece is dependent upon the larger compositions in Ezek. 16 and 23, which also use the 'adulterous sisters' theme.<sup>52</sup> However, although the position was adopted earlier that the *Kunstprosa* is not to be denied to Jeremiah, it is more to the point that Mowinckel and Rudolph do not assign 3: 6-11 to Source C, but rather assert its authenticity, and even Thiel acknowledges that little Deuteronomistic diction is present.<sup>53</sup> Furthermore, it is just as likely, if not more so, that Ezekiel is dependent on Jeremiah.<sup>54</sup> Finally, 3:10 should not be regarded as an insertion, since it can be connected with Jeremiah's dissatisfaction shortly before 622, rather than being regarded as an explanation for the calamity of 587.<sup>55</sup>

## 2. The Meaning and Date of 3:6ff.

<sup>49</sup>So Stade, 1884, 151ff; Rudolph, 1968, XV, 25, 29; Jobling, 45ff.

<sup>50</sup>Duhm, 1901, 32f, 41, 47; McKane, 1981, 230; 1986, 67, 72, 82f.

<sup>51</sup>Condamin, 1904, 382ff; 1936, 24f, 34ff.

<sup>52</sup>Hölscher, 1914, 385 (ftn. 1), 393 (ftn. 2); Hyatt, 1956, 789, 825f; 1984, 254; Holladay, 1958, 132f; 1986, 68, 77, 81, 116f; Thiel, 1973, 83ff; McKane, 1981, 229ff; 1986, lxiii, 64ff, 72, 82f.

<sup>53</sup>Mowinckel, 1913, 33, 42f; Rudolph, 1968, 27; Thiel, 1973, 89.

<sup>54</sup>Robinson, 1915, 487; Bright, 1951, 21.

<sup>55</sup>Pace Cornill, 1905, 38.

The reference to Josiah's reign in 3:6a, and the specific claim in 3:10 that Judah's return to Yahweh had been false (בשקר), potentially has significance for Jeremiah's position on the reforms of Josiah. However, no specific date in Josiah's reign is provided, and thus it is uncertain whether this statement was spoken before or after the critical year of 622. Kimchi raised the possibility that it is not Josiah's reforms, but rather earlier reformations such as that of Hezekiah which are intended, and this view has been adopted by many commentators.<sup>56</sup> However, taking the position that the reforms began in 628, such a statement as that in 3:10 would have to be understood in relation to Josiah's reforms, unless a specific reference to earlier developments were present. Since this is not the case, Josiah's policies are the backdrop for this judgement.

The above conclusion raises the question of what specifically is being denounced as false. One position is that of Welch, who sees in 3:10 a statement of Jeremiah's position on the reforms, and even the reformers themselves. For Welch, this passage expresses the view that the reform was false in principle, and focused on external rituals.<sup>57</sup> However, such a reading of 3:10 is tenuous. First, if the reform itself were denounced, Jeremiah would not have praised the one responsible for it in the terms found in Jer. 22:15f. But it should also be noted that in 3: 6-11, the entire nation is symbolised as a faithless woman who has returned in pretence. This suggests the nation as a whole, and thus it is not the reforms, but rather the overall response to them which is denounced as false, i.e. it was not whole-hearted. It is not the actions of the king, but rather the people in general which will determine whether satisfactory repentance has taken place (see section VIII).

However, the issue of the cultic nature of the reforms of 628-622 is important when read in light of the two stages of Jeremiah's activity before 622, as suggested in section VI. Many exegetes date the statement in 3:10 to the period of time following the introduction of Deuteronomy in 622, when Jeremiah began to feel dissatisfied with what was developing.<sup>58</sup> But while this approach is possible, 3:10 can be understood in light of the second stage of

<sup>56</sup>Leslie, 38f; Rudolph, 1968, 28f; Berridge, 1970, 80 (ftn. 44); Fohrer, 1974 77.

<sup>57</sup>Welch, 1921a, 269f; 1921b, 469ff; 1928, 84ff, 92.

<sup>58</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 16, 19; Mowinkel, 1913, 57; Habel, 1968, 57; Lundbom, 1993, 92f.

Jeremiah's activity before the appearance of Deuteronomy, i.e. during the time when the reforms were predominantly of a cultic nature. The issue of cultic religion is also raised in Lam. Rabbah I: 53, which suggests that Josiah's death at Megiddo in 609 was a judgement for secret idolatry continued after the Josianic reforms,<sup>59</sup> and Rashi applies this to 3:10. Others link a return to idolatry with this passage.<sup>60</sup> But the idea of a significant holdover of idolatry during Josiah's reign lacks proof, and a different interpretation suggests itself. 3:10 clearly presupposes that reforms had taken place, and also that Jeremiah had found cause to express substantial dissatisfaction with the people's response to these reforms, i.e. their return was only half-hearted. Therefore it can be concluded that after the outward manifestations of idolatry and syncretism were eventually removed by Josiah's policies, the moral and social sins of the people were all the more noticeable (5:1-6:30), and thus Jeremiah could declare that while some return had taken place, this was not with the whole heart, because it did not go beyond the cultic sphere of life. Consequently, Yahweh was not satisfied. This connects 3: 6-11 with the second stage of Jeremiah's pre-622 activity, and a date perhaps a little later than those suggested by Volz (627-625) and Leslie (626-624).<sup>61</sup> Thus the judgement in 3:10 may well reflect Jeremiah's verdict on the extent of the nation's spiritual renewal not long before Deuteronomy appeared and addressed the moral and social issues which, in Jeremiah's assessment, hindered a genuine return to Yahweh.

VIII. 5:1ff; 6: 27-30.

#### 1. Introduction: Authenticity and Textual-Criticism.

The texts 5:1ff and 6: 27-30, which frame the material in 5:1-6:30, are relevant to understanding Jeremiah's activity in relation to Josiah's reforms. While it is likely that the material in 5:1-6:30 is made up of separate oracles currently arranged into a discourse focusing on moral condemnation, the texts 5:1 and 6: 27-30 clearly provide a beginning and end. 5:1 contains the command to search

<sup>59</sup>Rabbinowitz (ed), 142f.

<sup>60</sup>Ewald, 1868, 103, 108.

<sup>61</sup>Volz, 1928, 47; Leslie, 17.

Jerusalem for a single righteous man. There then follows various observations of moral and social wrongs until finally in 6: 27-30, the prophet, depicted as an assayer (יִסָּדֵן), declares the verdict. Thus 5:1ff and 6:27ff relate to one another,<sup>62</sup> and can be examined together. While many commentators reckon with minor interpolations in these two passages, the authenticity of the material as a whole is not generally disputed. However, it has been suggested that Jer. 5: 1-6 is a late text dealing with the issue of theodicy, being similar to Gen. 18:22ff.<sup>63</sup> But even if 18:22ff is a late apologetic text,<sup>64</sup> this does not necessitate that Jer. 5:1ff is as well. The latter deals less with theodicy than the exposing of Judah's sins, and the idea of a concerted search among a city's residents is found in Zeph. 1:12, and later with Socrates and Diogenes.<sup>65</sup> It is thus a natural course of action for an individual evaluating his contemporaries. The claim that 6:27ff is late because of its similarities with 1:18<sup>66</sup> requires that one share this view of the latter, and it was argued earlier that Jeremiah and Baruch were responsible for the call narrative. Moreover, in 6:27ff Jeremiah's view of himself as Yahweh's assayer indicates a reflection on his call to be a prophet, and 15: 19-21 shows that he was prone to this. Nor should 6:30b, or the whole verse, be regarded as a gloss,<sup>67</sup> since the words יִסָּדֵן הָאֵל represent the assayer's official verdict, and are thus indispensable.

In the case of 5:1ff, the text provides only one significant textual-critical issue. The plural imperatives seem to conflict with the idea that Yahweh is ordering Jeremiah to seek out a single righteous man in Jerusalem, since one would usually expect singular imperatives. One solution has been to posit Jeremiah, not Yahweh, as the speaker.<sup>68</sup> But this requires the deletion of אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל, which clearly requires Yahweh as the speaker. But there is no support for such a deletion in the versions, and thus Yahweh should be regarded as the speaker in 5:1. Various suggestions have been

<sup>62</sup>Duhm, 1901, 56; Volz, 1928, 84f; Rudolph, 1968, 37; D. R. Jones, 1992, 139.

<sup>63</sup>Carroll, 1984, 19f, 26ff; 1986, 173ff.

<sup>64</sup>So Skinner, 1910, 304ff; Westermann, 347ff.

<sup>65</sup>Plato, *Apologia* 21A-23D, Flower (ed); Diogenes Laertius, *Life of Diogenes* 41, Hicks (ed).

<sup>66</sup>Carroll, 1986, 115, 204.

<sup>67</sup>Pace Erbt, 135, and Fohrer, 1974, 80, respectively.

<sup>68</sup>Duhm, 1901, 57; Skinner, 1948, 138; Fohrer, 1974, 65.



made to identify a plural recipient: the prophets, an unspecified general audience, the people of Jerusalem, Yahweh's divine council, witnesses in a symbolic law court, or sources urging Yahweh to spare Jerusalem.<sup>69</sup> However, Jeremiah's role as בָּחוֹן in 6:27ff suggests that he carried out the task of testing the people, and therefore he should be included as receiving the commands.<sup>70</sup> The plural imperatives are to be explained as a result of the material's inclusion in the *Urrolle*, thereby inviting the audience of 605 to note the truth of the observations.

In relation to 6: 27-30, textual-criticism becomes a far more complicated matter. This passage has been the object of many rewritings of the text. However, it has been rightly noted that MT here presents a basically clear text, with only a few difficulties.<sup>71</sup> A full discussion of the textual-critical issues is beyond the scope of this study, and thus only a few comments can be made here. First, מִבְּצָר ("fortress") in 6:27, which clashes with בָּחוֹן, is a gloss from 1:18.<sup>72</sup> In 6:28, סְרִי סוֹרְרִים is to be understood as a superlative.<sup>73</sup> The words נְחֹשֶׁה וּבְרָזָל are not a gloss.<sup>74</sup> The image is that of assaying silver, and the conclusion that the people are symbolically dross, supports an equating of the people with the unwanted parts of the ore. The words should be retained where they are, and not moved to vs. 29.<sup>75</sup> In 6:29, the Qere, מֵאֵשׁ הֵם, should be followed (so LXX), rather than separating the words into מִפְּחָם אֲשֶׁתָּם (i.e. two dual nouns).<sup>76</sup> The verb נָחַר, which some have taken to be a niphal of נָחַר, is really a qal form of the verb נָחַר ("to pant"),<sup>77</sup> as the noun נִחְרָה ("panting") in Jer. 8:16 indicates. Finally, רָעִים should be rendered "dross,"<sup>78</sup> although it does not otherwise have this meaning. In this case, it simply involves an extension of its usual

<sup>69</sup>Giesebrecht, 1894, 29; Binns, 48; Thompson, 233 (ftn. 1); Carroll, 1984, 22, 33, 52; Holladay, 1986, 175f; McKane, 1986, 115.

<sup>70</sup>Volz, 1928, 60ff; Lundbom, 1975, 77; Craigie, 87.

<sup>71</sup>So Condamin, 1936, 58; G. R. Driver, 1955, 85; *pace* Skinner, 1948, 156.

<sup>72</sup>S. R. Driver, 1903, 48 (note 29); Janzen, 133; McKane, 1986, 153ff.

<sup>73</sup>G. R. Driver, 1954, 242f; Waltke and O'Connor, 267.

<sup>74</sup>*Pace* Loretz, 231f.

<sup>75</sup>So Condamin, 1936, 58; Holladay, 1986, 230; *pace* G. R. Driver, 1937/8, 104; Soggin, 1959, 97.

<sup>76</sup>*Pace* Dahood, 298.

<sup>77</sup>Rashi; GKC §67u; Holladay, 1986, 228, 232.

<sup>78</sup>Volz, 1928, 83; D. R. Jones, 1992, 140.

<sup>79</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 45; Leslie, 74.

meaning "bad," i.e. dross as the bad part of the ore, occasioned by the application of the imagery to the people of Judah.

## 2. The Significance of 5:1ff and 6: 27-30 to the Josianic Reforms.

According to 5:1, Jeremiah is to find a single righteous man in Jerusalem. Presumably he then searched the capital, and 5:1-6:30 records his shock at what he discovered. But one is left wondering whether he found his righteous man. 6: 27-30 supplies the answer. The imagery in this passage involves the process of assaying material which is supposedly silver, and it may well be that like the situation with the potter (18:1ff), Jeremiah had personally observed the *ḥinḥ* at work.<sup>80</sup> The activity described is specifically that of cupellation, whereby the metal is placed along with lead into a cupel, and the lead acts as a flux to remove the contaminants. But cupellation is used for two purposes: treating crude lead, and assaying silver.<sup>81</sup> The fact that Jeremiah is here a *ḥinḥ* suggests that the cupellation process is being used for assaying, i.e. determining the silver content,<sup>82</sup> and thus smelting is not intended.<sup>83</sup> But the question remains as to whether 6:29f indicates that some amount of silver was discovered. Many scholars maintain that the latter is the case here, but the silver found is of such a minute quantity that it cannot be separated from the dross.<sup>84</sup> However, this can be questioned, since as long as the process is done correctly, one could expect the silver to separate from the dross, even if it was a small amount. According to 5:1, Jeremiah is only looking for a small amount. The inclusive terminology *ḥinḥ* is used twice in 6:28, and this suggests that the material being assayed contains no silver,<sup>85</sup> and must simply be discarded. Thus Jeremiah did not find his righteous man.

It is this all-inclusive judgement which becomes relevant to Jeremiah's attitude toward the reforms. In the passage 22:15f, where the prophet praises the reforming king, Josiah is specifically commended as one who *עָשָׂה כְּשֵׁפֶט וְצִדִּיקָה* ("did what was just and

<sup>80</sup>Leslie, 74.

<sup>81</sup>Guillaume, 130; Holladay, 1986, 230ff.

<sup>82</sup>Holladay, 1986, 230ff; Craigie, 110.

<sup>83</sup>Rudolph, 1968, 51.

<sup>84</sup>S. R. Driver, 1906, 39; Bright, 1965, 49; McKane, 1986, 154.

<sup>85</sup>Cf. Ewald, 1868, 124; Craigie, 110.

right"). Such an assessment could conflict with 5:1ff; 6: 27-30 as understood above, since not a single righteous man was found in Jerusalem. It would also have implications for reformers like Ahikam, who later protected Jeremiah, and consequently the reforms themselves. For scholars who maintain that no reforms were carried out until 622, there is no problem with Jeremiah speaking inclusively here, since it involves a pre-reform setting.<sup>86</sup> Scharbert specifically points to passages such as 5:4f as requiring a pre-reform date for such material.<sup>87</sup> Another solution is to place the material in the post-622 period, and link it with Jeremiah's growing disappointment.<sup>88</sup> A third approach would eliminate Josiah altogether by placing the material in question after Josiah's death, and in the case of 5:1ff, May specifically cites the implications the passage has for Jeremiah's view of Josiah as requiring such a date.<sup>89</sup> Finally, it has been suggested that 6: 27-30 indicates that Jeremiah could not have supported the reforms, since it expresses the prophet's final, dismal verdict on the eve of the events of 622.<sup>90</sup>

The first approach is excluded by the position adopted earlier on the beginning of the reforms, i.e. 628 rather than 622. As regards the fourth approach, it was argued previously that Jeremiah's dissatisfaction was with the people's response to the reforms, not the reforms themselves. Moreover, it does not sufficiently take into account the radically new scenario created by Deuteronomy's publication. But 6:27ff may indeed represent Jeremiah's opinion shortly before the events of 622 (see below). The second and third approach are possible as concerns date, but it should be noted that both 5:1ff and 6:27ff can be understood in light of the second stage of Jeremiah's pre-622 activity, as defined in section V. The main issue in understanding passages such as 5:1ff and 6:27ff during the period of the cultic reforms of 628-622 is whether the inclusive nature of the judgement expressed about everyone in Jerusalem is to be taken literally. Many commentators appear to adopt this position.<sup>91</sup> However, the difficulty in taking this verdict literally, Josiah and his reformers aside, and even disregarding the prophet

<sup>86</sup>Weiser, 1966, X, XVf; Rudolph, 1968, IV, XIX, 1, 4, 45(!), 50f, 80.

<sup>87</sup>Scharbert, 44.

<sup>88</sup>Skinner, 1948, 138ff, 150, 160.

<sup>89</sup>May (5:1ff), 1945, 226 (ftn. 45); Thompson, 234f, 266.

<sup>90</sup>Fohrer, 1974, 51, 80f.

<sup>91</sup>May, 1945, 226 (ftn. 45); Ellison, 27ff.

himself and men like Baruch, is the simple fact that it is impossible that, at any time in Jerusalem's history, every single individual in the capital was a moral degenerate. For this reason, attempts have been made to limit the scope of the prophet's verdict, such as the proposals that Jeremiah was speaking only in relation to business affairs, that the prophet met no righteous men because they were all hiding from the wicked, or that Jeremiah denies only the existence of influential men who rebuked sinners and upheld justice during judicial procedures.<sup>92</sup> It has also been suggested that Jeremiah gave this verdict after a relatively short stay in Jerusalem, and therefore had not become familiar with men like Ahikam.<sup>93</sup> But such explanations retain the literal sense of the verdict by imposing limitations which are not present in the relevant passages themselves. The reference to the *יְדוּלִים* (5:4) and *יְדוּלִים* (5:5) suggests a less restricted scope of vision for the prophetic assayer.

The best explanation is to regard the verdict as rhetorical exaggeration, with the idea being that in his searching, the prophet encountered such extensive wickedness, that it so eclipsed the faithfulness observable in the capital that he made this sweeping judgement. Carroll notes Ezekiel's view in Ezek. 9:1ff. In his vision of the city's destruction, a mark is placed upon the foreheads of the faithful in order to distinguish them from the wicked, suggesting that there were righteous men in Jerusalem. Moreover, such all-inclusive verdicts like that in 5:1ff are characteristic of Jeremiah: 6:13; 8:6, 10; and 9: 2-5, and examples of this type of hyperbole are common to the prophetic traditions in general.<sup>94</sup> Ezekiel's response to the visionary scene in 9:1ff as the wicked are slain is instructive here. As they fall before his eyes, Ezekiel desperately asks whether Yahweh intends to slay "all" of Israel's remnant (9:8). Now the LXX lacks *כָּל־*, but even without this word, it is clear from what is said earlier that Yahweh is not planning to destroy Israel's remnant, as the process of putting a mark on the righteous men indicates. Ezekiel's question exaggerates the situation. One may also note the reaction of Ezekiel to the death of a single man in Ezek. 11:13, where he poses the same question to Yahweh as in 9:8. Thus it is

<sup>92</sup>B. *Hag.* 14a, Abrahams (ed); b. *Sabb.* 119b, Freedman(ed); Joseph Kimchi, *per* David Kimchi; Abarbanel, respectively.

<sup>93</sup>Duhm, 1901, 56f; cf. also Rudolph, 1968, 37.

<sup>94</sup>Carroll, 1984, 23ff, 33; 1986, 175f.



best to regard the verdict found in both 5:1ff,<sup>95</sup> as well as that in 6:27ff,<sup>96</sup> as rhetorical exaggeration. But a further observation should be made here. Since Jeremiah sought more than simply cultic reform, i.e. that the people turn to Yahweh inwardly as evidenced by morality, then Yahweh's willingness to reprieve Judah would not depend on Josiah and his officials, but rather on the true repentance of the people generally. This would suggest that the king and his reform leaders are not to be included in the condemnation,<sup>97</sup> as well as the fact that Josiah's presence in Jerusalem at the time of the pertinent oracles is irrelevant.<sup>98</sup>

In conclusion, it can be said that 5:1ff and 6:27ff can be read in light of the second stage of Jeremiah's activity in the years 627-622. Fohrer's position that 6:27ff represents an expression of Jeremiah's opinion of the nation's spiritual state shortly before the appearance of Deuteronomy is quite likely to be correct. But it is not the reforms which provoked this verdict. The prophet had realised that despite the purified religious environment created by a king zealously devoted to Yahweh, the moral and social behaviour of the people had not improved. Therefore their return to God was false (3:10). It may also be true that Jeremiah was on the verge of relinquishing any hope in the nation's avoiding the judgement of Yahweh when he spoke 6:27ff. But a dramatic event took place not long after the statement made in 6:27ff, i.e. the discovery and publication of Deuteronomy in 622, and this gave the prophet new hope.<sup>99</sup> When Jeremiah heard the terms of the covenant read aloud by Josiah to the large gathering in Jerusalem, he realised that its stringent moral and social demands addressed the situation which he had come to lament during the second stage of his activity in the years 627-622. Thus he publicly came forward to support the law book (11: 1-8), intent on making the most of this new opportunity to bring about real change.

#### IX. Jeremiah and the Post-622 Era of Josiah's Reign.

<sup>95</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 41; Giesebrecht, 1907, 30; Freedman, 34.

<sup>96</sup>Cf. Erbt, 136; Rudolph, 1968, IV.

<sup>97</sup>Pace H. Schmidt, 242ff; Thompson, 238, who include the reformers.

<sup>98</sup>Pace Holladay, 1986, 176f.

<sup>99</sup>Volz, 1928, 85f; Rudolph, 1968, IV, 50f.



## 1. The Public Readings of Deuteronomy and Covenantal Festivals.

It was argued above that a period of silence on Jeremiah's part after 622 is indeed plausible, given the appearance of Deuteronomy and Jeremiah's reaction to it. This event offered the opportunity to bring about reform in the people's morality and social conscience. The discussion of 11: 1-8 indicated that Jeremiah undertook to encourage the acceptance of Deuteronomy's standards publicly. Since he appears to have gone throughout the towns and villages of Judah, this probably occurred over a period of a few years, punctuated by other activities (e.g. farming). The text of 11: 1-8 may represent the type of address he delivered on such occasions, and thus simply provides an example of his message at that time. Eventually he would have to wait and see whether the terms of the covenant became reflected in the people's lives.

But this does not necessitate that his withdrawal was absolute. It was noted earlier that it is likely that Deut. 31:10ff (the septennial reading of Deuteronomy) was taken seriously by Josiah, and thus Deuteronomy would have been read aloud at the celebration of Sukkoth in 615.<sup>100</sup> Jeremiah may well have spoken out again at this time, in terms similar to 11: 1-8. Moreover, once the system of three pilgrimage festivals went into effect, Jeremiah would again have had the opportunity to respond to readings from the torah. But given the reaction under Jehoiakim, it would seem that popular disaffection with the reforms would have been perceivable prior to Josiah's death. Jer. 17: 1-4 can be understood as expressing such a perception.

## 2. Jer. 17: 1-4.

### A. Authenticity and Textual-Criticism.

The issue of authenticity is particularly relevant here, given that LXX lacks the entire piece, and vv. 3-4 are found, with variations, in 15:13f. Nonetheless, very few scholars have suggested that 17:1ff is secondary.<sup>101</sup> The omission in LXX is not intentional,<sup>102</sup> but rather is

<sup>100</sup>So Holladay, 1985, 326ff; 1986, 1f.

<sup>101</sup>Holladay originally did so (1961, 172ff). He later decided in favour of its authenticity (1986, 484).

clearly the result of haplography caused by the occurrence of יהוה in 16:21 and 17:5.<sup>103</sup> As concerns the presence of vv. 3-4 in 15:13f, it has long been recognised that these verses are an intrusion in chapter fifteen, and do not fit the context.<sup>104</sup> Thus this is not an instance where Jeremiah uses the same material on different occasions,<sup>105</sup> but rather is to be explained as 17:1ff having originally followed 15:10ff, or as textual confusion resulting from both pieces having stood in adjacent columns in ancient manuscripts.<sup>106</sup>

Like 6:27ff, 17:1ff has received considerable attention concerning textual-critical issues. However, the Massoretic text is relatively straightforward, apart from a few minor difficulties. The most significant aspect is that of 2b-3a. But since the textual issues in the latter are intimately linked to the meaning of the text, these will be addressed later. Only a few textual-critical comments can be made here. In 17:1, *נִבְחָחוּ יָכֶם* should be emended to read a third person suffix in relation to those in 17:2.<sup>107</sup> In vs. 2, the words *בְּנֵיהֶם קִזְכּוּר* and the list of items dealing with the *bamoth* cult are represented in the versions, and will be discussed below. In the expression *עַל-עֵץ רִעֵן*, which deviates from the usual use of *עַל-הַר* in this stereotyped phrase, *עַל* does not need to be emended,<sup>108</sup> since in this case it should be rendered "beside."<sup>109</sup> In 17:3, the word *הַרְרִי* is not a gentilic form, vocative, or noun with a first person possessive suffix.<sup>110</sup> It should be pointed as a plural construct (*הַרְרֵי*), and viewed as an equivalent to "high hills" in 17:2.<sup>111</sup> The mountain imagery supports the idea that *שָׂדֶה* here means "mountain plain."<sup>112</sup> In 17:3, the problematic reading *בְּחִיזֵיךְ בְּחִיזֵיךְ* should be solved by transposing the two words.<sup>113</sup> Finally, the difficult reading *וּבְךָ* in 17:4 is to be emended by reading *וּבְךָ* for *וּבְךָ*,<sup>114</sup> and while *וּבְךָ*

<sup>102</sup>Pace Jerome; Duhm, 1901, 142; Gerstenberger, 394f.

<sup>103</sup>Cornill, 1905, 209; Rudolph, 1968, 105; D. R. Jones, 1992, 237.

<sup>104</sup>H. Schmidt, 277; Bright, 1965, 109f; McKane, 1986, 384.

<sup>105</sup>Pace G. V. Smith, 229f.

<sup>106</sup>Hitzig, 1866, 127; Janzen, 133, respectively.

<sup>107</sup>So V, Cornill, 1905, 210; McKane, 1986, 384f; pace Duhm, 1901, 142.

<sup>108</sup>Pace H. Schmidt, 223; Volz, 1928, 183f.

<sup>109</sup>So Rashi; Kimchi; McKane, 1986, 384.

<sup>110</sup>Pace MT and Rashi; Kimchi and V; and Giesebrecht, 1907, 99, respectively.

<sup>111</sup>So Greek texts; see also Peake, 1910, 221; McKane, 1986, 384f.

<sup>112</sup>Propp, 230ff.

<sup>113</sup>So Targum and Kimchi.

<sup>114</sup>Graf, 1862, 241; Orelli, 1905, 77; Holladay, 1986, 483.

קִרְאוּ read the verb עָבַד instead of עָבַד, this is due to the influence of 15:14. However, the Vulgate reads עָבַד, which is adopted here.

#### B. The Meaning and Date of 17: 1-4.

17:1ff accuses the people of having their sin engraved on both the tablet of their heart, as well as on the horns of their altars. The tablet of the heart appears in Prov. 3:3 and 7:3, where it may indicate some kind of item which was worn. Thus Ehrlich suggests that here in 17:1ff, the subject is a small tablet for notes worn on the chest.<sup>115</sup> A similar attempt to understand the statement literally has prompted Couroyer to see the tablet of the heart as either a pendant shaped like a pagan deity, or an engraved amulet.<sup>116</sup> Greek texts add στήθος before "heart," which may also indicate a literal interpretation. However, Jeremiah uses the word "heart" in the sense of "inner being" (4:4); see also Ezek. 20:16 and 36:26f. Jer. 17:1ff should be viewed as a contrast to 31:33, where it is said that in the future, Yahweh's torah will be written on the heart, i.e. internalised (see chapter six, section VII). Thus 17:1ff refers to the inward spiritual state of the people. Some scholars suggest that the tablet of the heart upon which sin is engraved is a metaphor for the people suffering from a guilty conscience, caused by their past sins.<sup>117</sup> However, a guilty conscience would actually be regarded by Jeremiah as a good sign, i.e. they have come to acknowledge their sin, something they habitually refused to do (2:29f, 35; 8:6). Thus it would not meet with such a denunciation as in 17:1ff, and consequently the idea of a guilty conscience is to be rejected.<sup>118</sup> It has also been proposed that the idea of an engraved tablet indicates the permanency of Judah's guilt and sin,<sup>119</sup> implying that it could not be forgiven. However, while Job 19:24 connects such engraving with permanency, Thompson aptly notes that Jer. 31:31ff indicates that Judah's sin is not permanently written on its heart, since it will one day be replaced with Yahweh's torah.<sup>120</sup> This suggests that the

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<sup>115</sup>Ehrlich, 285.

<sup>116</sup>Couroyer, 426ff.

<sup>117</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 162f; Duhm, 1901, 142; Orelli, 1905, 77, 80.

<sup>118</sup>Keil, 1986, 275; Volz, 1928, 184; McKane, 1986, 387.

<sup>119</sup>Kimchi; Fohrer, 1974, 132; McKane, 1986, 387.

<sup>120</sup>Thompson, 417.

symbolism of engraving is not permanency, but rather deep-rootedness,<sup>121</sup> and can thus can still be removed.

The nature of Judah's sin is defined in 17:2f. The reference to altars in 17:1 makes it clear that the issue here is cultic. However, without 17:2, it is not clear whether the reference is to the Yahweh cult, or to the syncretistic cults. It has been noted that the horns of the altar were important in purification rituals in the Pentateuch.<sup>122</sup> Thus some scholars opt for the first position, and maintain that the reference to the *bamoth* cults in vv. 2b-3 is a gloss meant to deflect criticism away from the Yahweh cult, and onto the *bamoth*.<sup>123</sup> Others would retain both a reference to the Yahweh cult, and elements of *bamoth* worship, and thus Jeremiah condemns *current* syncretism.<sup>124</sup>

However, neither approach is totally satisfactory. The deletion of 2b-3a is arbitrary. The material is present in the versions, and it must be said that the deletion is being made specifically to change the sense of the current reading. Some commentators attempt to give this a more firm foundation by attributing it to the Deuteronomistic redactor.<sup>125</sup> But there is no reason why this expression should be denied to Jeremiah, since its use in Deut. 12:2 indicates that it was current in Jeremiah's time. Holladay notes that the ultimate source of the expression may be Hos. 4:13, and he plausibly regards Jeremiah as the one who standardised the expression.<sup>126</sup> The second approach is tenuous since, if the *bamoth* cults were patronised at the time of the oracle, there would be no need to "remember" (זכר) the elements of those cults, i.e. they would have the real things before them. Ball attempts to address this by understanding זכר in the sense of being "mindful" of current activity.<sup>127</sup> But clearly the more natural sense is "remember." Another suggestion is to see the altars as Yahweh altars defiled by previous idolatry, or as Holladay proposes, the altar in Jerusalem (emending מִזְבֵּחַ חֲזָקָה to מִזְבֵּחַ חֲזָקָה) is used for the purified Yahweh cult, with the people fondly yearning for pre-Josianic religious

<sup>121</sup>Volz, 1928, 184; Leslie, 124f; Holladay, 1986, 486.

<sup>122</sup>Nägelsbach, 1871, 162.

<sup>123</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 98; Thiel, 1973, 202f; Carroll, 1986, 349f.

<sup>124</sup>Bright, 1965, 117f; Drinkard, 223f.

<sup>125</sup>Hyatt, 1956, 789, 949; 1984, 256; Thiel, 1973, 202f.

<sup>126</sup>Holladay, 1961, 170ff.

<sup>127</sup>Ball, 349f.

practices.<sup>128</sup> While Holladay's understanding of זכר is the right one (see below), one may legitimately question the idea that 17:1 refers to Yahweh's altars in the temple. The mention of altars in both 17:1 and 17:2 strongly suggests that these altars are the same, and the latter verse clearly indicates *bamoth* worship. This leaves the supposition that the cultic element here in 17: 1-4 has nothing to do with the purified Jerusalem cult, but rather the idolatrous, syncretistic *bamoth* cults.<sup>129</sup> McKane's approach is particularly interesting, in that while he regards 17:2 to be a gloss on the last part of 17:3, and he eliminates the reference to the *bamoth*, he nonetheless regards כָּל גְּבוּלֵיָהּ as indicative of a charge of idolatry.<sup>130</sup> Since the practices of the Yahweh cult were similar to those of other peoples, the horns of the altar in rites of purification can be held to have played a role in the *bamoth* cults as well.

This leaves the issue of the phrase כָּזָכַר בְּנֵיהֶם, a construction involving the infinitive construct with a prepositional prefix. Scholars have approached this clause differently. It was noted earlier that many scholars delete 2a, including these two words. But other commentators who delete 2a nonetheless retain כָּזָכַר בְּנֵיהֶם, suggesting an emendation which regards the word as a noun, with the idea being that of a 'memorial' certifying Judah's sin before Yahweh. Two proposals have been made: לִזְכָּר לְפָנָי,<sup>131</sup> and the more commonly adopted כָּזָכְרוֹן בָּהֶם.<sup>132</sup> The emendation, like the deletion, is arbitrary, and an adequate sense can be obtained from the present reading. Holladay follows the current wording, although he maintains that כָּזָכַר requires a parallel clause with a finite verb, and thus adds a comparative clause of 'remembering,' in this case concerning the "fathers."<sup>133</sup> However, other commentators have retained the current reading without such interpolation,<sup>134</sup> which, given the feasibility of the current reading, is the best approach.

One last relevant issue must be raised, i.e. whether בְּנֵיהֶם is the subject, or the object, of the verb. One approach has been to regard it as an accusative, with the third person plural in the passage being

<sup>128</sup>Keil, 1986, 275f, 278; Holladay, 1986, 483f, 487.

<sup>129</sup>Duhm, 1901, 143; Condamin, 1936, 147; Clements, 104f.

<sup>130</sup>McKane, 1986, 384ff.

<sup>131</sup>Giesebrecht, 1907, 99.

<sup>132</sup>Volz, 1928, 183f; Thompson, 416 (note 4).

<sup>133</sup>Holladay, 1986, 484.

<sup>134</sup>Bright, 1965, 118; McKane, 1986, 384f; Drinkard, 221.



the nominative: "as they remember their sons." But exegetes adopting this reading disagree about the meaning of the preposition. For some it means "like" in a comparative sense. This emphasises a memory of the syncretistic cults involving the same fondness as that felt for their own children.<sup>135</sup> Other scholars regard the preposition as denoting "when," with the statement being linked to the practise of child sacrifice. Nägelsbach views the children as both part of the subject, as well as the accusative. Thus they remember with horror what their parents had done in sacrificing their brothers and sisters, with Molech having become a bogey-man in the imagination of Judahite children.<sup>136</sup> The element of child sacrifice is emphasised by Lattey, who emends *בְּזֶכֶר* to read *בְּזִבְחָם* ("upon the horns of their altars, where they were sacrificed").<sup>137</sup> However, a reference to child sacrifice is tenuous, since the oracle speaks of the *bamoth* in general, i.e. throughout the land, whereas the cult of Molech seems to have been concentrated in the valley of Ben-Hinnom just outside Jerusalem. Moreover, *בְּנֵיהֶם* here does not mean "children" as opposed to adults, but rather the current generation.<sup>138</sup> But the main issue here is whether *בְּנֵיהֶם* is really the accusative. McKane has noted that the more natural reading is to regard "their sons" as the subject, i.e. those doing the remembering.<sup>139</sup> Thus it can be concluded that *זָכַר* here denotes a longing or yearning for the *bamoth* cults of the pre-reform era.<sup>140</sup> As noted earlier, other commentators uphold the basic idea of a fondness for the illicit cults, but maintain that they are being practised at the time when the oracle was spoken. However, if the people had the relevant cults available to them at the time, they would not need to "remember" them. Thus Jeremiah is condemning the longing felt by certain elements of the Judahite population for the old *bamoth* cults.

### C. The Date of 17: 1-4.

<sup>135</sup>Rabbi Eleazar in *b. Sanh.* 63b, Snachter and Freedman (eds); Kimchi; Keil, 1986, 278.

<sup>136</sup>A Jewish tradition cited (and rejected) by Kimchi; see also Hitzig, 1866, 129; Nägelsbach, 1871, 162f.

<sup>137</sup>Lattey, 52f.

<sup>138</sup>So Orelli, 1905, 77, 80.

<sup>139</sup>McKane, 1986, 384f.

<sup>140</sup>*B. Sanh.* 63b, Schachter and Freedman (eds); Rashi, Kimchi; Keil, 1986, 278; Binns, 138f; Holladay, 1986, 487.

The observations made above suggest a date. Since the current reading of 17:2 has been upheld, it becomes the most significant indicator of date. Many scholars place the oracle in the reign of Jehoiakim,<sup>141</sup> Jehoiachin,<sup>142</sup> or Zedekiah,<sup>143</sup> i.e. in the post-Josianic period. But a post-609 date is tenuous. Since the old cultic practices returned after Josiah's death, there would be no reason why the people should concern themselves with looking back in yearning upon the past, since the option to participate actively in existing cults currently existed. But the same can be said against the suggestion that the piece be dated prior to 622, following the apparent chronology of Josiah's reforms found in 2 Kings.<sup>144</sup> The implications of *כִּזְכֹּר בְּיָדָם* is that the date of the oracle is after the elimination of the *bamoth*, but before Josiah's death. The people are looking back with longing to the pre-reform practices, unable to return to them because of Josiah's policies, which dealt harshly and forcefully with syncretism. This confirms a late post-622 Josianic date,<sup>145</sup> and indicates that late in Josiah's reign disaffection with the reforms was perceptible among the people. This would eventually lead to the different policies of Josiah's successors. It is in light of such feelings that Jeremiah delivered this oracle, and the considerations discussed above therefore suggest a general date late in Josiah's reign, perhaps not long before 609.

#### D. Conclusion.

The conclusion to be drawn is that the period 622-609, following his activity on behalf of the moral and social standards of Deuteronomy, was a time when Jeremiah was less active in his public appearances, as he waited to see what effect Deuteronomy's introduction would have on the spiritual condition of the nation. During this period, however, he presented addresses similar to that retained in 11: 1-8, perhaps during the pilgrimage festivals in Jerusalem, and the public reading of Deuteronomy in 615. But

<sup>141</sup>Graf, 1862, 207f; Condamin, 1936, 147; Hyatt, 1956, 780.

<sup>142</sup>Ball, 347ff.

<sup>143</sup>Fohrer (post 598 at least), 1974, 131ff; Holladay, 1986, 486.

<sup>144</sup>Pace Duhm, 1901, XIV, 142f; H. Schmidt, 223f; G. A. Smith, 1923, 221 (note 89).

<sup>145</sup>Keil, 1986, 22f, 25, 275f, 278.

toward the end of Josiah's reign, he expressed outrage at the appearance of longing for the practices of the pre-reform era. Thus it was only a relative, rather than an absolute, silence which marked the years 622-609.

#### X. Conclusions.

This chapter looked at the claim, made by scholars who uphold 627 as the date at which Jeremiah began to prophesy, that Jeremiah withdrew from public activity after the publication of Deuteronomy in 622. It was noted that prophets like Jeremiah did not receive remuneration for their oracles, and thus they must have done something else to earn a living. Amos was a farmer, and given the fact that this was the occupation of most people in the pre-industrial era, and that there is no evidence that Jeremiah was a cultic functionary or court official, he too was probably involved in agriculture. The demands of earning a living make it inevitable that prophetic activity was sporadic, with various periods of silence throughout the year. It was also noted that Isaiah is usually credited with having withdrawn from public activity for a considerable span of time, and this serves as a precedent for a period of relative silence on Jeremiah's part. Moreover, Jer. 25:3 was shown not to contradict this, intending only to express that Jeremiah earnestly proclaimed Yahweh's word whenever he received it. It was maintained that the reason for this withdrawal was that Deuteronomy's appearance in 622 was regarded by Jeremiah as an opportunity for the people of Judah to emend its moral behaviour and social conscience in light of the provisions found in Josiah's law book. The significant feature of Deuteronomy was its demand for inward renewal and the fostering of a relationship based on mutual love (אהבה) between Yahweh and His people, which is echoed in Jeremiah's message. The material found in Jer. 2-6 in general was explained in light of the cultic reforms of Josiah in the period 628-622, i.e. prior to Deuteronomy's publication. This was done to put Jeremiah's pre-622 message into an historical context, and to show that while very little in the book of Jeremiah can be dated to the Josianic era with certainty, much can be read in light of such a context. The material in 2:1-4:2 deals predominantly with idolatry and syncretism, and thus can be seen

as reflecting Jeremiah's response to the launching of Josiah's cultic reforms. The polemics in this section would justify the king's measures on a popular level, and this was interpreted as support for the attempt to re-establish Yahweh as Judah's only God. But 4:3ff, particularly 5:1-6:30, condemn moral and social failings, and thus reflect a second stage of Jeremiah's pre-622 activity when he realised that the cultic reform had not been accompanied by an improvement in the moral and social spheres of life. Jer. 3:10 was explained as a pre-622 verdict on the extent of the nation's return to Yahweh which expresses the dissatisfaction Jeremiah felt during this second stage. The all-inclusive statement that there were no righteous men in Jerusalem, found in 5:1ff and 6:27ff, was understood as rhetorical exaggeration, and thus while Josiah and the reformers are not included here, it nonetheless expresses Jeremiah's disillusionment with the nation's repentance just prior to 622. On the verge of rejecting any possibility of averting Yahweh's judgement, the appearance of Deuteronomy in 622, which addressed precisely the prophet's moral and social concerns, offered a new opportunity. He publicly supported its principles among the people, and doing so throughout Judah would have entailed activity over a few years. 11: 1-8 provides an example of his message at this time, and also pronouncements he would have made during the covenantal pilgrimage festivals, and the public reading of Deuteronomy in 615. Thus while the prophet would have to have withdrawn from public activity to wait and see whether the people's lives changed in relation to the provisions of the covenant, his silence was not absolute. It was also noted that the religious reaction after Josiah's death implies that disaffection with Josiah's religious policy had taken root among the people before 609. Jer. 17: 1-4 was forwarded as an indication of this, and represents Jeremiah's denunciation of a tendency to look back fondly on the religious practises of the pre-reform era. This suggests that the prophet spoke this oracle late in Josiah's reign. Therefore the idea that Jeremiah's career saw a period of time during which he had withdrawn from constant prophetic activity (622-609) is well-founded. But this should be qualified as a time of relative, rather than absolute, silence, meaning that while he appeared publicly at times to proclaim Yahweh's word, this was done only infrequently during the period of 622-609.

# CONCLUSION

The conclusion to be reached from the discussion in this dissertation is that the date 627 as the point at which Jeremiah began his prophetic career is the most plausible one. In assessing this date, it was shown that the various alternatives suggested by modern scholarship are problematic. There is nothing to support the idea that the date in 1:2 and 25:3 is an error for a different date, and the theory that 627 represents the date of Jeremiah's birth fails to recognise that 1:5 speaks of the time *before* the prophet's birth. Moreover, the original connection between 1:2 and 1:5 indicates that Yahweh's word was received by Jeremiah in 627, which is not consistent with that year being the date of his birth. The proposal that there was a gap of approximately six years between the prophet's call and his commission is contradicted by Yahweh's immediate dismissal of the excuse offered by Jeremiah against prophetic activity (1:7), and particularly by the prophet's own admission that he had no choice but to announce Yahweh's message (20:9). When he attempted to exercise such choice, the divine word became like a fire within him, and he could not restrain it. It was also suggested that the other uses of *וַיִּקְרָא* in introductory clauses like that in 1:13 do not support such a long space of time between the two visual signs of the prophet's call experience. But it was also suggested that the year 627 meets an important presupposition which many scholars have had in relation to determining the date when Jeremiah first appeared,



namely that of a significant historical impetus. 627 was the year in which the Assyrian king Assurbanipal died, and the serious problems in the Assyrian empire which became apparent toward the end of his long reign would have indicated to a keen observer of the times that with Assurbanipal's death, Judah stood on the threshold of a new phase of its history. Since the nation still stood in danger of Yahweh's imminent judgement, this crucial time required the appearance of a prophet such as Jeremiah to reiterate the message of the prophets of the preceding era.

Then the individual objections which have been forwarded as requiring an alteration of the 627 date were examined, and shown to be invalid. In relation to the claim that all the passages which connect Jeremiah with Josiah's reign are redactional and consequently unreliable, it was shown that Jeremiah and Baruch were directly involved in fixing the prophet's oracles in writing, and that the date in 1:2 derives from them. It has also been suggested that the age presupposed by Jeremiah's declaration of celibacy (16:1ff), and the presence of Deuteronomic influence in the call narrative, require a date lower than 627. However, it was noted that 16:1ff reflects the prophet's interpretation and finalisation of a celibate lifestyle already adopted because of the uncertainty as to whether Judah would avoid Yahweh's judgement. Moreover, it was argued that Deuteronomic influence prior to 622 should be linked to Jeremiah's familiarity with traditions fostered by groups in Jerusalem and Anathoth who further developed the Deuteronomic ideas brought to Judah from the north in 722. The objection that the foe from the north material envisaged Babylon as the invader from the beginning was shown to be tenuous, since an overall examination of the relevant material indicates that the foe was originally unidentified. Moreover, Jeremiah's complaint in 20:10 indicates a long period of activity during which the threat of invasion was unfulfilled, and this suggests a time of relative peace and security for the original presentation of the foe oracles. This accords well with the 627 date. Attention was also directed to the related objections that Jeremiah does not mention or take a position on Josiah's reforms, and that Huldah, rather than Jeremiah, was consulted when Deuteronomy appeared in 622. The latter situation was explained as the result of the prophet not yet having attained a

prominent reputation as a validated prophet of Yahweh by 622. In relation to the former objection, a comparison with the analogous situation involving the prophet Isaiah and the reforms of Hezekiah was analysed, and it was concluded that if Jeremiah had not addressed the reforms of Josiah in the tradition associated with him, a good precedent is to be found in Isaiah's silence on Hezekiah's reforms, and the fact that this situation has not caused scholars to deny Isaiah's activity during the reign of Hezekiah militates against doing so in relation to a period of activity under Josiah on the part of Jeremiah. However, it was also demonstrated that while he was not officially involved in Josiah's reforms, he was unofficially involved in promulgating Deuteronomy after its publication in 622, when he publicly stated his support for the law book. Thus unlike Isaiah, who said nothing about that feature of Hezekiah's reforms which distinguished them from those of Josiah, i.e. the destruction of the bronze snake-image called Nehushtan, which had figured prominently in the prophet's call experience, Jeremiah did speak out on that feature unique to Josiah's measures, namely the publication and elevation of Deuteronomy in 622. Finally, the objection that none of Jeremiah's oracles can be dated with certainty to Josiah's reign was handled by showing that Jer. 2-6 can indeed be read in light of a period of activity comprising 627-622. In the discussion of Josiah's reign, the view was adopted that the king's reforms began in 628, and thus the years 628-622 represented one stage of the reforms, which focused on changes in the nation's cult intended to re-establish the sole worship of Yahweh. With Deuteronomy's appearance in 622, a new stage began which offered the opportunity to address the moral and social problems of the nation. In relation to Jeremiah's activity, the years 627-622 were divided into two phases. In the first, Jeremiah came forward with scathing attacks directed at idolatry and syncretism, thereby assisting Josiah's efforts to purge the nation's cult, and providing them with moral and religious justification. While the king pursued systemic changes, the prophet presented the case in favour of this directly to the people. However in the second phase, Jeremiah perceived that the cultic changes had not led to a change in the moral and social conscience of the nation, and thus he criticised the people's false return to Yahweh, not the

reforms themselves. Once syncretism and idolatry had receded, the moral and social failings of the people became so obvious that the prophet was on the verge of abandoning the hope that the nation might avoid Yahweh's wrath. But then Deuteronomy appeared in 622, and its strict demands regarding morality and social conscience offered the opportunity to address the problems which the cultic reforms could not correct. Josiah publicly endorsed the new law book as the official document governing the nation's covenant with Yahweh, and Jeremiah responded by advocating the people's adherence to the covenantal demands stated in it. At some point subsequent to this, the prophet withdrew from appearing regularly in public, having to wait and see whether the people of Judah would take advantage of this final opportunity to repent and avoid judgement, although he would have spoken out during certain public occasions, such as the pilgrimage festivals and the public reading of Deuteronomy in 615. This period of relative silence lasted until the death of Josiah, when the reforms lapsed because of popular dissatisfaction. However, this dissatisfaction began to emerge toward the end of Josiah's reign, when some people tended to look back fondly on the pre-reform era. Jeremiah condemned the emergence of this sentiment in 17: 1-4. Since the prophet would have needed substantial time to pass before he could determine whether the people of Judah had positively responded to the principles of Deuteronomy, the objection to the 627 call-date based on this period of relative silence is to be dismissed.

Thus the date 627 as that which marked the beginning of the career of the prophet Jeremiah is indeed confirmed, and the prophet's message can be explicated against the historical background of the years 627-622.

## ABBREVIATIONS

AAA	<i>Annals of Archaeology and Anthropology</i>
AASFB	<i>Annales Academiae Scientiarum Fennicae Series B</i>
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
AJSL	<i>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literature</i>
AJT	<i>American Journal of Theology</i>
AmJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AnBib	<i>Analecta Biblica</i>
AOAT	<i>Alter Orient und Altes Testament</i>
ATANT	<i>Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments</i>
AusBR	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
BA	<i>Biblical Archaeologist</i>
BASOR	<i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i>
BBB	<i>Bonner biblische Beiträge</i>
<i>b. B. Bat.</i>	<i>Baba Bathra, Babylonian Talmud</i>
<i>b. Ber.</i>	<i>Berakoth, Babylonian Talmud</i>
BDB	<i>Brown, Driver, and Briggs</i>
BETL	<i>Bibliotheca ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</i>
BFCT	<i>Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie</i>
<i>b. Hag.</i>	<i>Hagigah, Babylonian Talmud</i>
BHS CA	<i>Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia; Critical Apparatus</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>b. Meg.</i>	<i>Megillah, Babylonian Talmud</i>
<i>b. Pesah.</i>	<i>Pesahim, Babylonian Talmud</i>

<i>b. Sabb.</i>	<i>Sabbath, Babylonian Talmud</i>
<i>b. Sanh.</i>	<i>Sanhedrin, Babylonian Talmud</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testaments
BWAT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten Testament
BZAW	Beihefte zur ZAW
CAH	<i>Cambridge Ancient History</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
DDD	<i>Dictionary of Deities and Demons</i>
ERE	<i>Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics</i>
ErFor	Erträge der Forschung
EvQ	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
Exp	<i>Expositor</i>
ExpTim	<i>Expository Times</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literature des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GKC	Gesenius-Kautzsch-Cowley
Hdt	Herodotus
HSM	Harvard Semitic Monographs
HTR	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
IDB	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
IEJ	<i>Israel Exploration Journal</i>
Int	<i>Interpretation</i>
JA	<i>Journal asiatique</i>
JAOS	<i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i>



JBL	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JNES	<i>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</i>
JPh	<i>Journal of Philology</i>
JQR	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
JR	<i>Journal of Religion</i>
JSOT	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament; Supplement Series
JSS	<i>Journal of Semitic Studies</i>
JTS	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KB	Koehler-Baumgartner
LB	Luckenbill, Daniel David
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Massoretic Text
MVAG	Mitteilungen der vorderasiatisch-ägyptischen Gesellschaft
NSSP	New Synendenham Society Publications
Or	<i>Orientalia</i>
OTS	<i>Oudtestamentische Studiën</i>
PEQ	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
RA	<i>Revue d'Assyriologie et d'archéologie orientale</i>
RB	<i>Revue biblique</i>
RGG	<i>Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart</i>
RSR	<i>Recherches de Science religieuse</i>
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series

SBOT	Sacred Books of the Old Testament
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
ST	<i>Studia Theologica</i>
T	Targum
TGUOS	<i>Transactions of the Glasgow University Oriental Society</i>
TLZ	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TRE	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i>
TRu	<i>Theologische Rundschau</i>
TSK	<i>Theologische Studien und Kritiken</i>
TWAT	<i>Theologisches Wörterbuch zum Alten Testament</i>
TZ	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
V	Vulgate
VT	Vetus Testamentum
VTSup	Vetus Testamentum, Supplements
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testaments
ZA	<i>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</i>
ZAW	<i>Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
ZDMG	<i>Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft</i>

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